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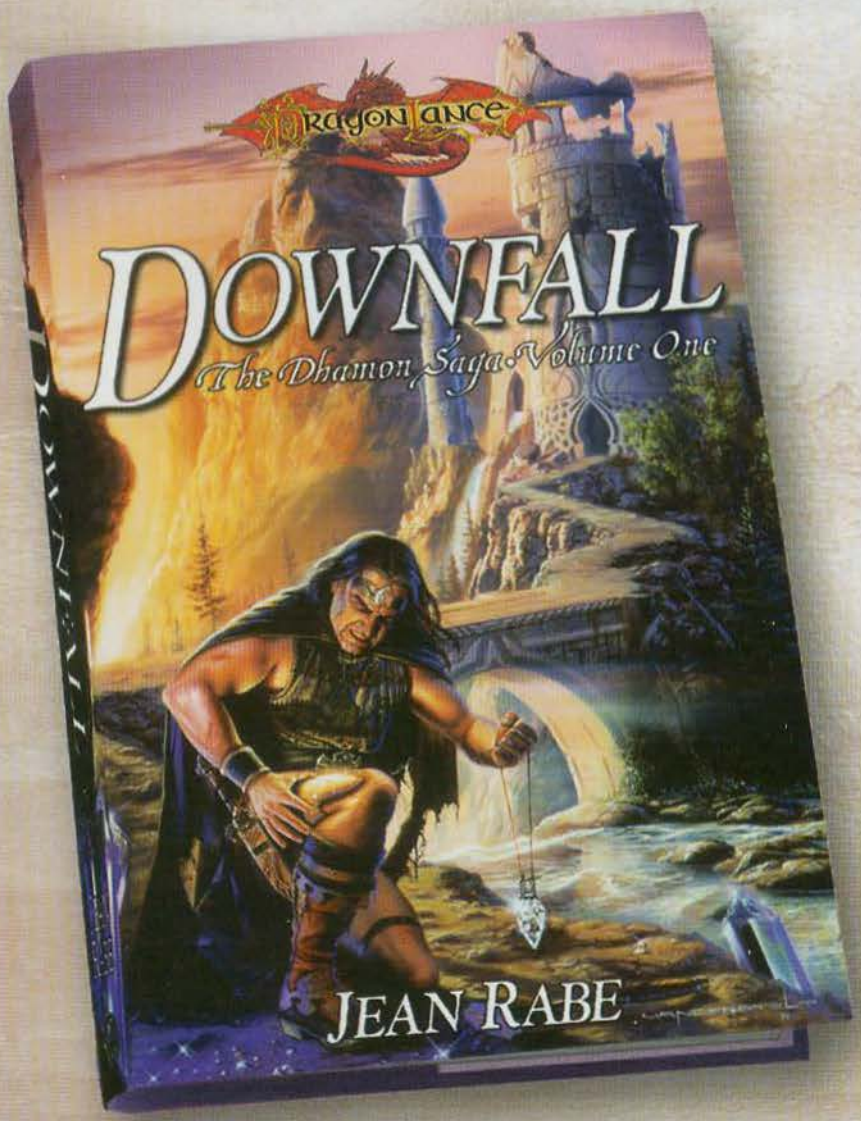

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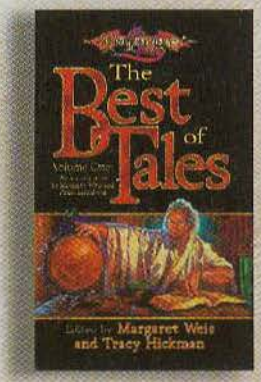

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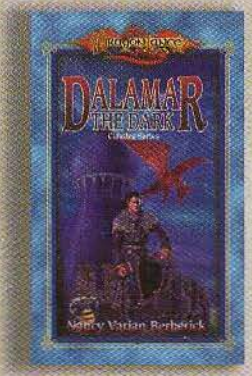

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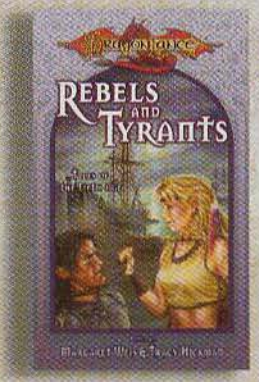

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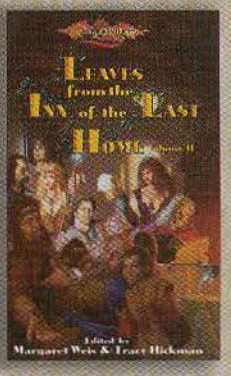

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It's not every day that one gets to see a half-dragon in full armor stop for an artist. Illustrator Glenn Harrington claims that his subject refused to sit for the portrait, but grudgingly agreed to stand.

Though the armor was inspired by Italian Renaissance style, the peaceful face is drawn from an ancient Ethiopian king's mask, for which he was expelled from a Dallas museum after snapping a photo.

–Peter Whitley, Art Director

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DRAGON Magazine (ISSN# 0279-6848) is published monthly for $34.95 per year by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., 1801 Lind Ave. SW, Renton, WA 98055, United States of America. Periodicals Postage Paid at Renton, WA, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO DRAGON Magazine, P.O. BOX 469107, ESCONDIDO, CA 92046. ©2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this magazine may be reproduced (except for review purposes) without the prior written permission of the publisher. Material published herein does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., its employees, or its editorial staff, who are not liable for opinions expressed herein. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies that publish those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status. WIZARDS OF THE COAST; TSR; DUNGEONS & DRAGONS; ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS; D&D; AD&D; FORGOTTEN REALMS; DRAGONLANCE; PLANESCAPE; RAVENLOFT; BIRTHRIGHT; MYSTARA; SPELLFIRE; GREYHAWK; DARK SUN; SPELLJAMMER; AL-QADIM; COUNCIL OF WYRMS; MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH; MONSTROUS COMPENDIUM; ALTERNITY; STAR*DRIVE; DARK•MATTER; ALIEN COMPENDIUM; FIFTH AGE; DUNGEON MASTER; PLAYER'S OPTION; DRAGON; DUNGEON; POLYHEDRON; LIVING CITY; LIVING GREYHAWK; GEN CON; RPGA are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

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Distribution Nationally and Internationally by Curtis Circulation Company, 730 River Road, New Milford, NJ 07646. Tel: 201-634-7400. Fax: 201-634-7499

Printed in the U.S.A.

In With the New

It doesn't matter whether you thought the millennium began last January or starts next year. If you're a D&D player, the new era began in August with the new edition of the rules. Even if you prefer other games, this year marks a huge turning point in an industry that had shrunk dangerously since its boom years. We're moving from a time when most paper game magazines couldn't survive, much less thrive, into a period in which we expect—and welcome—some vital and exciting competition. We'll even join in with some new magazines of our own.

One of the great things about playing D&D is its sheer popularity. Move to a new town, and chances are you'll find a D&D player before someone who plays other roleplaying games. That makes a big difference, since learning any new game takes time and effort you'd rather spend playing. Even though the new version of D&D is easier to learn and teach, many people would rather use the mechanics they already know.

The d20 system, the rules that form the basis of the D&D game, also drives the new STAR WARS roleplaying game (in stores soon). Since that game's bound to be hugely popular, it already has its own magazine: *STAR WARS Gamer Magazine.* The *STAR WARS* game and magazine are only the beginning—several new games based on the d20 rules are already underway here at Wizards of the Coast, and by this time next year, you'll be able to play any number of games and settings using the same rules you learned with D&D. That's not to say the rules for all the games are identical, but they're close enough that learning *STAR WARS* is a breeze if you've already learned D&D.

Even other companies and individuals can jump on the d20 bandwagon, as the Open Gaming License lets anyone publish d20 system games and supplements. In fact, the first d20 system supplements were available at the GEN CON Game Fair, and it looks like plenty more are on the way. Thus, for anyone who knows how to play D&D, learning another d20 game is a snap. For more information on the OGL, set your browser to **www.opengamingfoundation.org.**

For those who demand that *DRAGON* remain devoted exclusively to DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, have no fear. For d20 games other than D&D and *STAR WARS*, we'll bring you a completely new periodical named, surprisingly enough, *d20 Magazine.* Watch for it bundled with an issue of *DRAGON Magazine* next summer.

How I Spent My Summer Vacation

In his farewell editorial, Art Director Larry Smith left us with some advice that sunk in only recently, when several of our staff—myself included—traveled to Great Britain for a trade show and GEN CON U.K. Afterward, I went on to a whirlwind tour of book stores on U.S. military bases throughout southern Germany. That's when I experienced first-hand the wisdom of Larry's words: "Don't let your sense of adventure end at the gaming table."

Like most gamers, I'd have a hard time deciding between a week of nonstop gaming with my pals and a trip to Europe. As much fun as gaming is, imagining yourself on the streets of Waterdeep doesn't compare to standing inside the Tower of London, Shakespeare's Globe, or Heidelberg Castle. Even the gaming is more "authentic" when everyone at the table—well, except the DM—is getting the English accent right.

You've got to wonder why more gamers aren't world travelers. I think the time is right for fantasy vacations for those of us who grew up only imagining such adventures. When will travel companies combine German castles with LARPs? Or how about

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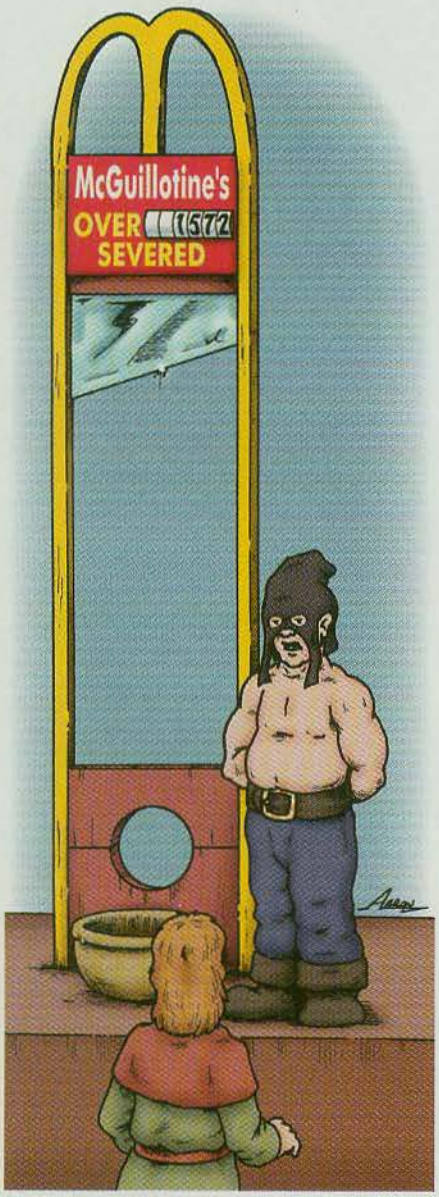
a Mediterranean cruise with gaming instead of showtunes? Hmm ...

The other lesson brought home during the trip is that the universal constants of gamer life hold true overseas. Two playtesters in Ramstein lost patience and attacked their parties just to try out the new combat rules, and I had to beat down a rules lawyer in Wiesbaden. It was almost like being at GEN CON.

Dragon and You

Watching our circulation go up is great in itself, but what we like even more is seeing the stream of your letters and emails turn into a veritable flood. The average number of article queries has at least doubled in the two months since the new *Player's Handbook* arrived, and we expect it'll double again by the time this issue sees print. The new edition has inspired a lot of new campaigns, which means more new contributors. We can't wait to see who the new "regulars" are a year from now.

Even if you don't have an article to contribute, share your thoughts on the new game, the state of the magazine, or recent developments in your own campaign by sending a letter to "Scale Mail" or "Forum." If you have a superlative player or DM, don't forget that you can nominate him or her as Player or DM of the Month, with all the glory and humiliation that comes with it.



"BUSINESS WAS SLOW, SO I BOUGHT INTO A FRANCHISE."

If that's not enough, now there are two new ways you can become a part of *DRAGON Magazine* in the coming year. While they aren't contests in the traditional sense, you might enjoy the "prizes" they offer.

Campaign Worlds

Practically every week, someone sends us a proposal for a series of articles detailing his or her campaign world, which the writer assures us is the Next Big Thing. Forget about the GREYHAWK, FORGOTTEN REALMS, or DRAGONLANCE settings; this world is the one everyone will be playing five years from now—if only the witty and handsome editors will devote a few hundred pages of *DRAGON* to the author's personal vision.

Well, we're sick of these letters, and even more sick of turning them all down. So at long last we're giving in ... under a few conditions.

Send us a *very* short description of your campaign world's unique features. When we say "short," we mean tiny—like 200 words or fewer. You can also include a map of the world, but it should be a photocopy no larger than four letter-sized sheets. In return, we'll show your brainchild to a celebrity critic, someone with plenty of experience in creating great fantasy worlds. Each month, we'll pick four or five of the most interesting descriptions and print them, along with the critic's comments and his or her favorite entry. At the end of the year, we'll pick one lucky finalist for a full-blown article (*not* a series!) presenting the campaign world for all to explore.

It could be your world.

If you don't include a map, you can send entries to **scalemail@wizards.com** with the subject line "Campaign Clinic." If you include a map, send it and the description together via regular post to:

Campaign Clinic c/o *DRAGON Magazine*
1801 Lind Avenue S.W.
Renton, WA 98055

All Right, Go Ahead and Tell Us About Your Character

If designing worlds isn't your thing, maybe you'd like to see how your character design skills stack up. We've tapped a few of the RPG R&D gnomes to examine your D&D characters and show you how to get the most out of the new skills, feats, and multiclassing rules.

Each month, we'll print the criteria for another round of reviews. (If you want a head start, check out the *DRAGON* message board at **www.wizards.com**.) Until then, send us any 1st-level character along with a short paragraph describing your ideal of that character. "Shade is the ultimate bounty hunter" is a good start. "I want a character who can track criminals and capture them alive" is even better, because it's more specific.

Each submission should be fewer than 200 words, including ability scores, feats, skills, and a brief description of what you'd like to accomplish with your character. Each month, we'll choose a few of the most interesting and let our resident gnome show you how to make it even better.

Send your characters to the same address, but with "Character Clinic" in the subject line or on the envelope.

While you're at it, drop us a line to tell us how you spent *your* summer. I hope it had some gaming in it!

Dave Gross • Editor-in-Chief

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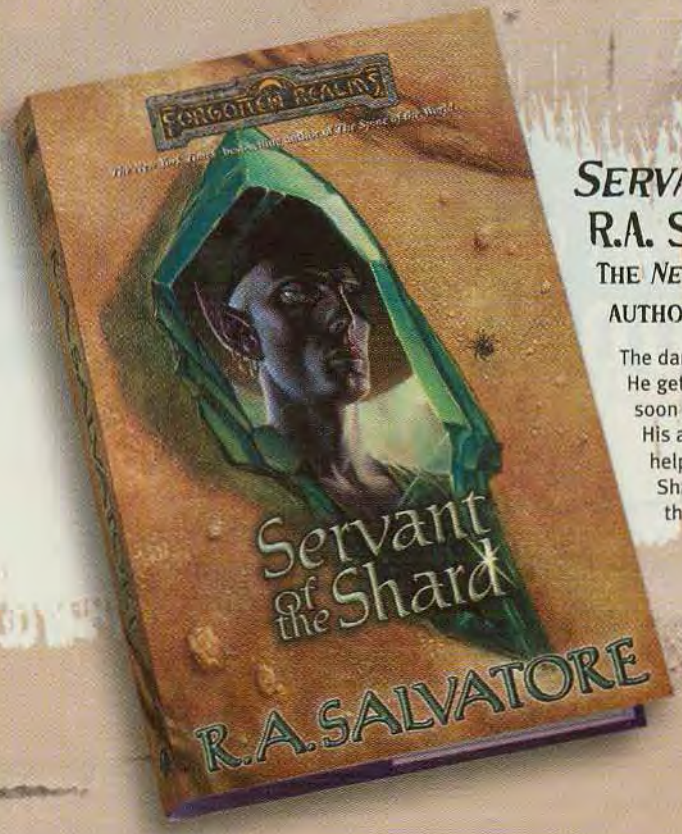

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R.A. SALVATORE
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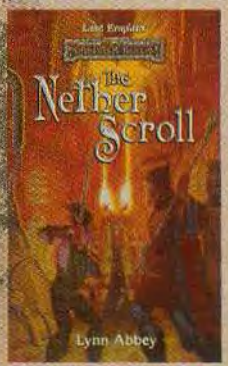
The dark elf Jarlaxle is bent on becoming all-powerful. He gets his greedy hands on the Crystal Shard, but soon the evil artifact's demonic force overcomes him. His assassin compatriot, Artemis Entreri, tries to help him break free, but the dark power of the Shard is too mighty. With time running out, they must seek help elsewhere.



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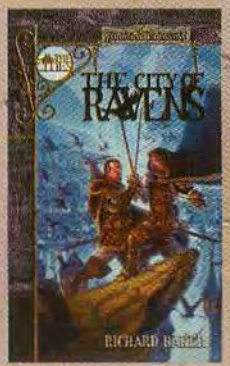

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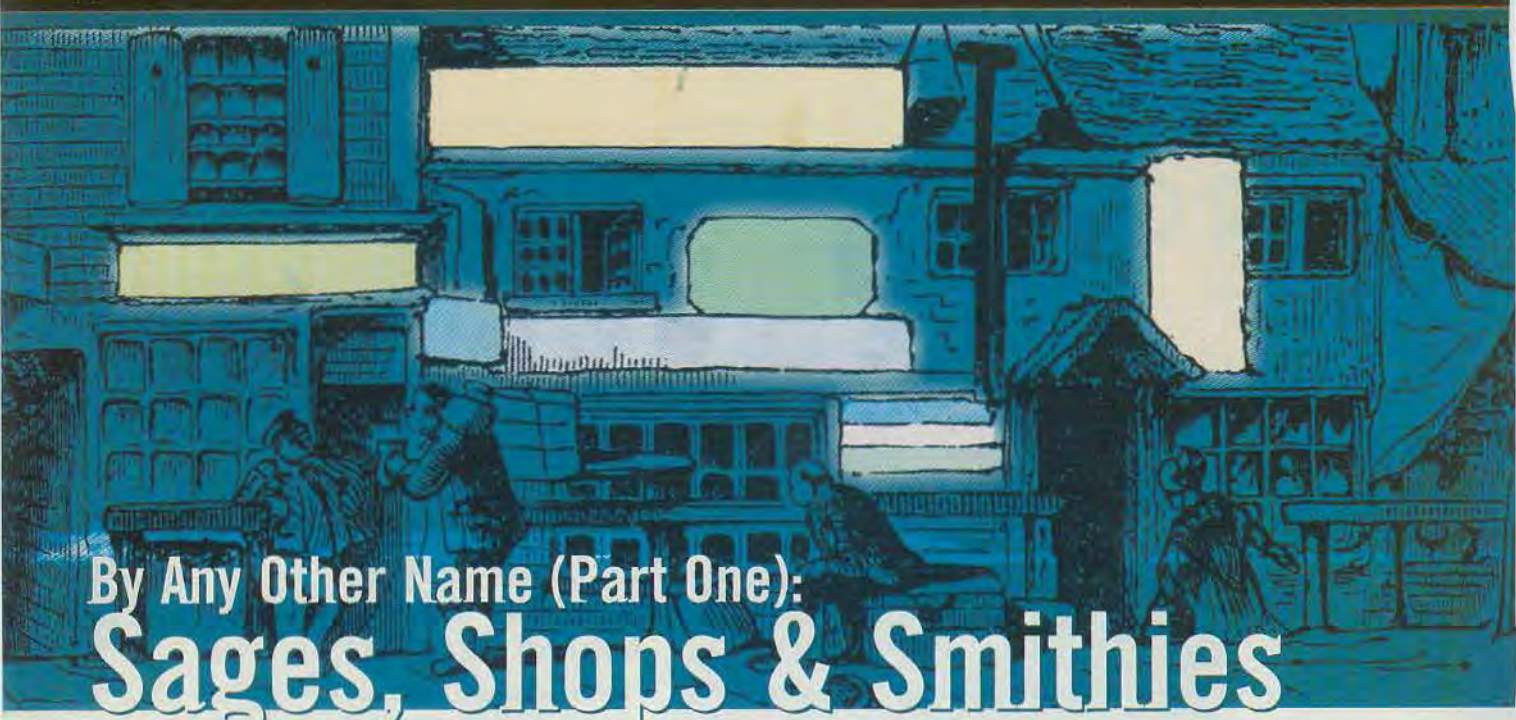

By Any Other Name (Part One): Sages, Shops & Smithies

by Owen K.C. Stephens

*Both sections of this article can be used to generate the name of a location, such as a shop or tavern. The first part, **Sages, Shops, and Smithies**, uses a method that generates the type of place first, followed by the name. The second section, **Taverns**, generates the name before the type of establishment.*

*Both methods can be used to generate an interesting name. Using the **Taverns** section first might inspire you to create a place you hadn't thought of before, just because it has an interesting name. Using **Sages, Shops, and Smithies** allows you to come up with a random establishment on the spot.*

Sages, Shops, and Smithies

Almost every group of adventurers eventually comes back to town. Whether the PCs seek to learn from the local alchemist, repair their armor after a long dungeon-crawl, or merely need a place to buy additional supplies, adventurers need a selection of shops, craftsmen, and sages. Whenever a DM tells the players their characters have found such a place of business, the players respond all too often with the question, "What's it called?"

Naming every business the PCs come across might seem like a needless chore, but it can add to the sense of reality that some players crave. Rather than simply going to an unnamed wayside farmer's market, players who find their characters standing outside The Rat's Apples might well ask themselves if they'd rather hunt in the woods for their provisions. Similarly, a fighter who needs some weapons repaired might prefer the Crossed Arms Smithy to the Iron House. It's probably too much to ask a DM to come up with names for dozens of shops from scratch every time a party of adventurers enters a new town. With the help of these name generators, that won't be a problem.

The following six tables (A-F) cover different types of businesses, such as markets, shops, and stores for wizards and sorcerers. Whenever a DM needs a name she can roll on the appropriate table to generate it. Each of these tables includes directions to roll on one or more of the numbered tables (1-8). If a DM doesn't like a particular name, she can either make some changes or re-roll.

There are three methods for rolling on each of the numbered tables. The first is designed to generate names that are more gnome or dwarven in sound. The second method creates elven or fey sounding names. The third is the general method and should be used when no particular flavor of name is desired. If the DM has name generators for other races (such as "By Any Other Name: Elves" in *DRAGON* #251), he might even wish to translate such names partially or wholly into another language.

For example, a DM finds she needs the name of a smithy the PCs have found by the edge of the road. She decides to roll on **Table C**, getting a 6. This leads her to roll once on **Table 4** and once on **Table 7**. Doing so, the DM determines the smithy is named Broken Beggar's Forge. If the DM doesn't like that name, she can re-roll on just **Table 4** or just **Table 7** (perhaps producing Beggar's Forge or Broken Knight's Forge), or she could start back at **Table A**.

Some shops, smithies, and farms are named after a local or mythic figure, or a creature or object associated with the figure (such as a magic shop named Mordenkainen's Hound). Since these figures vary from campaign to campaign, no such entries are provided on any of the following charts. However, the DM should always feel free to insert such a figure into an establishment's name. Generally no more than one in ten establishments is named after a legendary person or object.

How it Works

First roll on **Table A** and follow the instructions given. For example, rolling a "1" on a 1d10 leads you to roll once on **Table S1** to generate the first word of the name, then once on **Table S2** to generate the second word, then add the word "Farms" to the end, yielding a result such as "Drunken Goat Farms."

Table A:
FARMS AND MARKETS
Roll 1d10

1	Table S1 Table S2 Farms
2	The Table S7 's Market
3	The Table S7 's Table S8 & Table S8
4	Table S8 s & Table S6
5	The Table S8 Table S5
6	The Table S1 Table S7 's Table S6 & Table S8
7	Table S11 Table S2 Barns
8	Table S2 Square
9	The Table S7 's Table S8 Table S5
10	Table S4 Table S6 Orchards

Table B:
LIBRARIES, SCHOLARS, AND MAGE SUPPLY STORES
Roll 1d8

1	The Table S10 & Table S6
2	The Table S4 Quill
3	Table S5 of Table S10 (s)
4	Table S10 & Table S2
5	The Table S7 's Library
6	The Table S1 Wizard
7	The Table S12 Table S9
8	The Table S9 & Table S10

Table C:
SMITHIES AND ARMORIES
Roll 1d10

1	Table S11 Table S5
2	Table S6 & Table S6 Smithy
3	The Table S2 's Table S9
4	The Table S1 Blacksmiths
5	Table S4 Table S6 Table S11 monger
6	Table S4 Table S7 's Forge
7	Table S9 (s) & Table S9 (s)
8	The Table S4 Table S9
9	The Table S11 Table S9
10	The Table S9 Table S5

Table D:
MERCHANT SHOPS
Roll 1d8

1	The Table S12 Table S6
2	From Table S6 (s) to Table S8 (s)
3	Trader's Table S5
4	Table S3 of Merchants
5	Table S4 Table S6 Dry Goods
6	The Table S1 Table S7 Shop
7	Table S6 Table S6 & Table S6
8	The Table S2 's Bazaar

Table E:
ALCHEMISTS, SAGES, AND SPELLCASTERS
Roll 1d8

1	The Table S1 Sage
2	Sorcerer's Table S2
3	The Table S7 's Table S12 Table S5
4	Table S6 s & Potions
5	The Table S2 's Table S3
6	The Table S12 Table S10
7	The Table S3 of Table S10 s
8	The Table S12 Table S5

Table F:
GENERIC BUSINESS NAMES
Roll 1d10

1	Table S1 Table S2 's Table S3
2	The Table S4 Table S5
3	The Table S11 Table S7
4	The Table S7 's Table S4
5	The Table S6 Table S9
6	The Table S9 Table S3
7	The Table S1 Table S7
8	The Table S12 Table S6
9	The Table S4 Table S2
10	The Table S6 Table S5

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S1 S2 S3 S7 S8 S9

S4 S5 S6 S10 S11 S12

Table G: TAVERNS

Roll 1d20

1-2	The Table T2 Table T3 Example: "The Mystic Monk"
2-3	The Table T2 Table T4 Example: "The Cozy Centaur"
4-5	The Table T3 's Table T5 Example: "The Pirate's Saber"
6-7	Table T3 Table T8 Example: "Rogue's Den"
8	The Table T4 's Table T5 Example: "The Gnoll's Claw"
9	The Table T4 's Table T8 Example: "The Gremlin's Lair"
10	The Table T5 Example: "The Trident"
11	The Table T5 & Table T5 (Combine the two words in any order.) Example: "The Hook & Sickle"
12	The Table T5 & Table T6 (Combine the two words in any order.) Example: "The Bolt & Buckler"
13	The Table T6 & Table T6 (Combine the two words in any order.) Example: "The Cloak & Gauntlet"
14-15	The Table T7 Table T5 Example: "The Spinning Saber"
16-17	The Table T7 Table T6 Example: "The Golden Chalice"
18	The Table T7 Table T8 Example: "The Silent Keep"
19	The Table T8 Example: "The Battlement"
20	The Table T2 Table T9 Example: "The Cozy Cookhouse"

Table T2: ADJECTIVES

Roll 1d100

1	Arcane	51	Lusty
2	Amorous	52	Lyrical
3	Bearded	53	Magical
4	Bleary	54	Majestic
5	Boorish	55	Mighty
6	Brawny	56	Mirthful
7	Bumbling	57	Modest
8	Charming	58	Mysterious
9	Chuckling	59	Mystic
10	Clever	60	Nomadic
11	Cloaked	61	Peaceful
12	Comical	62	Prancing
13	Contented	63	Proud
14	Cozy	64	Rakish
15	Crazy	65	Reveling
16	Curious	66	Roaming
17	Dancing	67	Roaring
18	Dangling	68	Rowdy
19	Dazzling	69	Rumbling
20	Dreaming	70	Sagely
21	Drooling	71	Shady
22	Drowsy	72	Shifty
23	Drunken	73	Silly
24	Famished	74	Singing
25	Fearsome	75	Sleeping
26	Festive	76	Sleepy
27	Flying	77	Slumbering
28	Foppish	78	Sneezing
29	Frolicking	79	Snoring
30	Gasping	80	Snoozing
31	Gentle	81	Sorcerous
32	Giddy	82	Sprightly
33	Gleeful	83	Stalwart
34	Hanging	84	Stout
35	Harmless	85	Stuffed
36	Hapless	86	Stumbling
37	Happy	87	Sturdy
38	Honest	88	Tattooed
39	Honorable	89	Thirsty
40	Humble	90	Thoughtless
41	Hungry	91	Tickled
42	Impish	92	Timid
43	Innocent	93	Tipsy
44	Jolly	94	Tired
45	Jovial	95	Traveling
46	Juggling	96	Tumbling
47	Lazy	97	Virtuous
48	Laughing	98	Wandering
49	Lucky	99	Weary
50	Lumbering	100	Woozy

Table T3: PEOPLE

Roll 1d100

1	Acrobat	51	Journeyman
2	Adventurer	52	Knight
3	Alchemist	53	Lady
4	Apprentice	54	Lord
5	Archer	55	Mage
6	Armorer	56	Maid
7	Bandit	57	Maiden
8	Barbarian	58	Master
9	Bard	59	Mercenary
10	Barkeep	60	Merchant
11	Barmaid	61	Mistress
12	Bartender	62	Monk
13	Barterer	63	Navigator
14	Beggar	64	Paladin
15	Blacksmith	65	Peasant
16	Bouncer	66	Pilgrim
17	Bowman	67	Pirate
18	Brigand	68	Prankster
19	Carpenter	69	Priest
20	Child	70	Priestess
21	Cleric	71	Ranger
22	Cutpurse	72	Rascal
23	Cutthroat	73	Rogue
24	Druid	74	Sage
25	Drunkard	75	Sailor
26	Enchanter	76	Savage
27	Enchantress	77	Scoundrel
28	Falconer	78	Scribe
29	Farmer	79	Serf
30	Fisherman	80	Shipwright
31	Fool	81	Shrew
32	Forester	82	Soldier
33	Friend	83	Sorcerer
34	Gambler	84	Squire
35	God	85	Stranger
36	Goddess	86	Thief
37	Guard	87	Thug
38	Guardian	88	Trader
39	Guardsman	89	Traveler
40	Handmaiden	90	Urchin
41	Harlot	91	Virgin
42	Hermit	92	Vixen
43	Hero	93	Waif
44	Highwayman	94	Wanderer
45	Horseman	95	Warrior
46	Hunter	96	Weaver
47	Huntress	97	Wench
48	Illusionist	98	Whelp
49	Jester	99	Witch
50	Jeweler	100	Wizard

Table S1:
DESCRIPTIVES
Roll 3d10 for dwarves,
3d10+70 for elves, otherwise 1d100

01-04	Grumpy
05-08	Old
09-12	Stout
13-16	Crafty
17-20	Bold
21-24	Drunken
25-28	Sleeping
29-32	Hearty
33-36	Buxom
37-40	Blind
41-44	Crazy
45-48	Honest
49-52	Frowning
53-56	Blinking
57-60	Wandering
61-64	Welcoming
65-68	Merry
69-72	Good
73-76	Lucky
77-80	Laughing
81-84	Beautiful
85-88	Blue-eyed
89-92	Flying
93-96	Gallant
97-100	Fair

Table S2:
BEASTS
Roll 3d10 for dwarves,
3d10+70 for elves, otherwise 1d100

01-03	Serpent	51-53	Rooster
04-05	Badger	54-55	Tiger
06-08	Frog	56-58	Hare
09-10	Dragon	59-60	Wolf
11-13	Rat	61-63	Horse
14-15	Boar	64-65	Wasp
16-18	Mole	66-68	Raven
19-20	Bat	69-70	Eagle
21-23	Hound	71-73	Cat
24-25	Ram	74-75	Phoenix
26-28	Hog	76-78	Owl
29-30	Bear	79-80	Fox
31-33	Monster	81-83	Hawk
34-35	Eel	84-85	Pegasus
36-38	Pullet	86-88	Drake
39-40	Beholder	89-90	Swan
41-43	Goat	91-93	Stag
44-45	Bull	94-95	Falcon
46-48	Lion	96-98	Unicorn
49-50	Spider	99-100	Gryphon

Table S3:
ANIMAL DWELLINGS
Roll 1d4 for dwarves,
1d4+6 for elves, otherwise 1d10

1	Den
2	Burrow
3	Lair
4	Hole
5	Patch
6	Web
7	Lodge
8	Briar
9	Nest
10	Eyrie

Table S4:
ADJECTIVES
Roll 4d10 for dwarves,
4d10+60 for elves, otherwise 1d100

1-2	Wet	73-75	White
3-5	Half	76-78	Royal
6-7	Red	79-81	Green
8-10	Secret	82-84	Wooden
11-13	Black	85-90	Roll on S12
14-19	Roll on S11	91-93	Blue
20-21	Short	94-96	Ancient
22-24	Buried	97-100	Mystic
25-27	Gray		
28-30	Crossed		
31-33	Honored		
34-36	Broken		
37-39	Fireside		
40-42	Yellow		
43-45	Two		
46-48	Three		
49-51	Four		
52-54	Five		
55-57	Burning		
58-60	Frozen		
61-63	Ashen		
64-66	Sweet		
67-69	Hidden		
70-72	Shining		

Table S5:
PLACES
Roll 1d8+2 for dwarves,
1d10+20 for elves, otherwise 3d10

3	Clan	20	Moor
4	Guild	21	Grove
5	Keep	22	Court
6	Camp	23	Palace
7	Bailey	24	Garden
8	Bridge	25	Forest
9	Gate	26	House
10	Castle	27	Lodge
11	Donjon	28	Vale
12	Ford	29	Meadow
13	Balcony	30	Coliseum
14	Abby		
15	Home		
16	Room		
17	Dale		
18	Barn		
19	Galleon		

Table S6:
ITEMS
Roll 3d10 for dwarves,
3d10+70 for elves, otherwise 1d100

1-2	Lamp	51-52	Hammock
3-4	Barrel	53-54	Tun
5	Ale	55	Cobblestone
6-7	Horn	56-57	Broom
8-9	Earth	58-59	Cart
10	Nail	60-62	Roll on S9
11-12	Arms	63-64	Board
13-14	Cleaver	65	Skull
15	Anvil	66-67	Crown
16-17	Mug	68-69	Lily
18-24	Roll on S9	70	Star
25	Rock	71-72	Rod
26-27	Boot	73-74	Crystal
28-29	Stone	75	Sun
30	Cork	76-77	Oak
31-32	Miter	78-79	Flute
33-34	Anchor	80	Acorn
35	Fire	81-82	Air
36-37	Basket	83-84	Staff
38-39	Book	85	Harp
40	Coal	86-93	Roll on S9
41-42	Bell	94	Rose
43-44	Bottle	95-96	Ring
45	Candle	97	Wand
46-47	Ash	98-99	Moon
48-49	Cup	100	Elm
50	Water		

Table S7:
PEOPLE

Roll 1d8+3 for dwarves, 1d10+30 for elves, otherwise 4d10

4	Warrior	26	Dwarf
5	Brewer	27	Gnome
6	Baker	28	Angel
7	Priest	29	Mariner
8	Merchant	30	Druid
9	Lad	31	Lady
10	Lass	32	Lord
11	Smith	33	Scholar
12	Hero	34	Wizard
13	Witch	35	Knight
14	Corsair	36	Archer
15	Paladin	37	Dancer
16	Beggar	38	Woodsman
17	Hag	39	Harper
18	Brigand	40	Bard
19	Sister		
20	Brother		
21	Mother		
22	Father		
23	Jester		
24	Elf		
25	Halfling		

Table S8:
FOOD

Roll 1d10 for dwarves, 1d8+12 for elves, otherwise 1d20

1	Sausage
2	Ale
3	Roast
4	Mead
5	Cabbage
6	Mushroom
7	Soup
8	Pepper
9	Cheese
10	Bread
11	Rye
12	Barley
13	Fowl
14	Cream
15	Pastry
16	Berry
17	Apple
18	Wine
19	Milk
20	Cake

Table S9:
ARMS AND ARMOR

Roll 1d10 for dwarves, 1d10+10 for elves, otherwise 1d20

1	Gauntlet
2	Axe
3	Pick
4	Helm
5	Hammer
6	Pike
7	Mace
8	Flail
9	Bolt
10	Hatchet
11	Greave
12	Blade
13	Spur
14	Mail
15	Spear
16	Dagger
17	Arrow
18	Shield
19	Lance
20	Sword

Table S10:
WRITINGS

Roll 1d4 for dwarves, 1d6+4 for elves, otherwise 1d10

1	Runestone
2	Book
3	Tome
4	Manual
5	Text
6	Parchment
7	Scroll
8	Folio
9	Script
10	Page

Table S11:
METALS

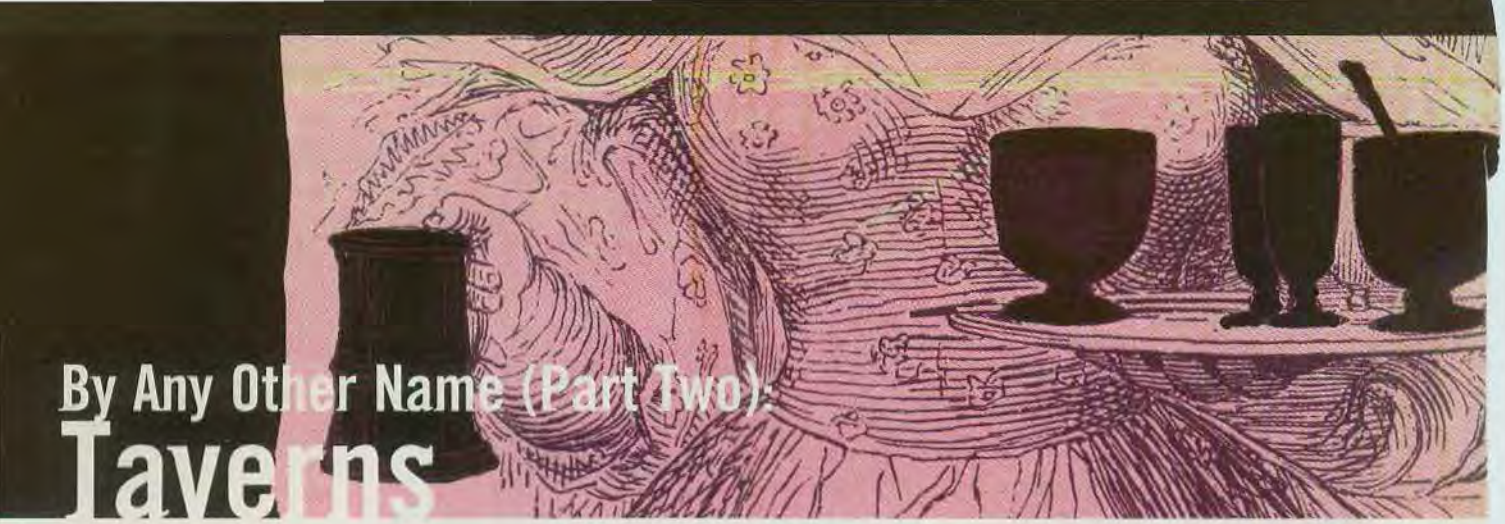
Roll 1d4 for dwarves, 1d4+6 for elves, otherwise 1d10

1	Iron
2	Steel
3	Mithril
4	Brass
5	Copper
6	Bronze
7	Silver
8	Gold
9	Platinum
10	Adamantine

Table S12:
MAGIC

Roll 1d4 for dwarves, 1d4+4 for elves, otherwise 1d8

1	Runic
2	Cryptic
3	Magical
4	Divine
5	Arcane
6	Mystic
7	Secret
8	Sorcerous



By Any Other Name (Part Two): Taverns

by Christoper West

The local tavern is a common feature of nearly every town or city an adventuring party is likely to enter during the course of a D&D campaign. It might be cliché, but a vast number of campaigns begin and end within the walls of a popular drinking establishment. Considering how much time adventurers often spend in such places, it seems fitting that each one should have its own unique name and personality.

All too often, though, inns and taverns begin to sound alike. Knowing how many of them a typical character visits during his adventuring career, this shouldn't come as a big surprise. After all, DMs have whole worlds to populate, and it's easy to gloss over each inn with a generic treatment while worrying about the layout and devious traps of a nearby dungeon. Ultimately, however, inns and taverns are some of the most important locations an adventuring party ever visits. Within the walls of an inn or tavern fights break out, allies are met, rumors are exchanged, and heroes and villains alike find shelter.

These tables will help you come up with fresh, original, and often amusing names for every tavern your characters enter. Usually the name will then suggest a theme or atmosphere for the place; a clever DM can turn a simple tavern name into a distinct and memorable identity. The players probably won't remember the unremarkable inn their characters last visited, but they're sure to recall the "Happy Halfling Alehouse" and the amusing antics of its bumbling yet cheerful proprietor.

How It Works

The tables below provide a wide variety of rolling options to create different tavern names. Begin by rolling 1d20 and comparing your result to **Table T1**. This suggests a roll or a series of rolls that you can make to produce a name. If you like one particular name type listed on **Table T1**, feel free to disregard the rest of them and roll the specific generation option that interests you.

You might find that many of the names created with this system seem absurd or just don't sound quite right. In the case of words with two or more parts, try discarding one of the words and picking a replacement word that begins with the same letter as the word you kept. For example, "The Dancing Dagger" might have a better ring to it than "The Dancing Talon." Also, don't forget that a weird-sounding name might be valuable in suggesting an amusing theme or background for the place: The "Roaring Pixie Inn" might be named after a diminutive guest who snored so loud that she woke the whole neighborhood.

If nothing else seems to work for you, it's fine to ignore the dice altogether and simply pick words from the various tables to build a name for your tavern.

Remember: While the tables below allow for the creation of a vast number of tavern names, they should not be considered complete. If you think of a word that would be great for a name but isn't included on these tables, by all means use it! This article is intended to spawn ideas, not limit them. Have fun with it!

After the name is generated, you might wish to randomly select a type of establishment by rolling on **Table T9**. Some buildings are commonly referred to with their full designation; other's aren't. For example, "The Weary Wanderer Inn" might be called "The Weary Wanderer" (or even "The Wanderer") by many local residents. Feel free to disregard **Table T9** if you don't plan on using such designations.

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T2 T3 T4 T5 T6 T7 T8

T9

Table T4:
CREATURES
Roll 1d100

1	Banshee	51	Jackal
2	Bear	52	Kobold
3	Beast	53	Leprechaun
4	Brownie	54	Lich
5	Bug	55	Manticore
6	Bugbear	56	Mare
7	Cat	57	Mermaid
8	Centaur	58	Merman
9	Chicken	59	Minotaur
10	Chimera	60	Mongrel
11	Choker	61	Monster
12	Cockatrice	62	Mule
13	Cow	63	Mummy
14	Cur	64	Naga
15	Demon	65	Nymph
16	Devil	66	Ogre
17	Dog	67	Orc
18	Doppleganger	68	Owl
19	Dragon	69	Owlbear
20	Drake	70	Pech
21	Drow	71	Pegasus
22	Dryad	72	Phoenix
23	Duck	73	Pig
24	Dwarf	74	Pixie
25	Eagle	75	Poltergeist
26	Elf	76	Pony
27	Faerie	77	Rat
28	Falcon	78	Satyr
29	Familiar	79	Sea nymph
30	Gargoyle	80	Serpent
31	Genie	81	Shade
32	Giant	82	Shadow
33	Gnoll	83	Sphinx
34	Gnome	84	Spirit
35	Goat	85	Sprite
36	Goblin	86	Stallion
37	Gremlin	87	Swanmay
38	Griffon	88	Titan
39	Half-elf	89	Treant
40	Half-orc	90	Troglodyte
41	Halfling	91	Troll
42	Harpy	92	Unicorn
43	Hawk	93	Vampire
44	Hippogriff	94	Werebear
45	Hobgoblin	95	Wererat
46	Hog	96	Werewolf
47	Horse	97	Wolf
48	Hound	98	Worm
49	Human	99	Wyrm
50	Imp	100	Wyvern

Table T5:
WEAPONS
Roll 1d100

1	Arquebus	51	Longsword
2	Arrow	52	Mace
3	Awl	53	Mallet
4	Axe	54	Mancatcher
5	Ballista	55	Missile
6	Bardiche	56	Morningstar
7	Bastard sword	57	Needle
8	Battleaxe	58	Net
9	Battlehammer	59	Partisan
10	Blade	60	Pick
11	Blowgun	61	Pike
12	Bolt	62	Point
13	Bow	63	Pole
14	Broadsword	64	Polearm
15	Bullet	65	Poleaxe
16	Cannon	66	Quarrel
17	Cantrip	67	Quarterstaff
18	Catapult	68	Ranseur
19	Crook	69	Rapier
20	Claw	70	Razor
21	Cleaver	71	Rod
22	Club	72	Saber
23	Conjuration	73	Scimitar
24	Crossbow	74	Scourge
25	Cutlass	75	Shaft
26	Dagger	76	Shield
27	Dart	77	Short sword
28	Dirk	78	Sickle
29	Edge	79	Sling
30	Fang	80	Snare
31	Fauchard	81	Spear
32	Fist	82	Spell
33	Flail	83	Spetum
34	Fork	84	Spike
35	Glaive	85	Spine
36	Greatsword	86	Staff
37	Guisarme	87	Stake
38	Haft	88	Stick
39	Halberd	89	Stone
40	Hammer	90	Sword
41	Handaxe	91	Talon
42	Handle	92	Thorn
43	Harpoon	93	Tooth
44	Hatchet	94	Trap
45	Hook	95	Trident
46	Javelin	96	Voulge
47	Khopesh	97	Wand
48	Kick	98	Waraxe
49	Knife	99	Warhammer
50	Lance	100	Whip

Table T6:
ITEMS
Roll 1d100

1	Ale	51	Lamp
2	Anvil	52	Lantern
3	Armor	53	Mask
4	Banner	54	Mast
5	Barding	55	Mead
6	Barrel	56	Mirror
7	Bauble	57	Mug
8	Bell	58	Portal
9	Biscuit	59	Potion
10	Bone	60	Pouch
11	Boot	61	Purse
12	Bottle	62	Quiver
13	Bracer	63	Ring
14	Brand	64	Rose
15	Bread	65	Rune
16	Breastplate	66	Sail
17	Buckle	67	Scabbard
18	Buckler	68	Scales
19	Cage	69	Shield
20	Candle	70	Sheath
21	Cap	71	Sigil
22	Chalice	72	Skirt
23	Cloak	73	Skull
24	Coin	74	Soup
25	Crest	75	Spell
26	Crock	76	Spellbook
27	Crown	77	Spice
28	Crystal	78	Spike
29	Cup	79	Spirits
30	Dress	80	Spoon
31	Flag	81	Standard
32	Flask	82	Steel
33	Flint	83	Stew
34	Gate	84	Stone
35	Gauntlet	85	Stool
36	Gem	86	Symbol
37	Glass	87	Table
38	Glove	88	Tack
39	Harness	89	Tackle
40	Helm	90	Tankard
41	Helmet	91	Tinder
42	Hilt	92	Torch
43	Hood	93	Treasure
44	Horn	94	Trinket
45	Jewel	95	Trophy
46	Keg	96	Tunic
47	Kettle	97	Whetstone
48	Key	98	Whistle
49	Kilt	99	Window
50	Ladder	100	Wine

Table T7:
ITEM DESCRIPTIONS
Roll 1d100

1	Amazing	51	Helpful
2	Ancient	52	Invisible
3	Astral	53	Lawful
4	Avenging	54	Magical
5	Baleful	55	Mighty
6	Baneful	56	Missing
7	Bashing	57	Misty
8	Battered	58	Mithril
9	Battering	59	Mystic
10	Biting	60	Neutral
11	Blazing	61	New-forged
12	Bludgeoning	62	Nicked
13	Brandished	63	Ornate
14	Brass	64	Polished
15	Broken	65	Remarkable
16	Bronze	66	Royal
17	Chaotic	67	Rusty
18	Colorful	68	Sentient
19	Conjured	69	Sharpened
20	Copper	70	Shattered
21	Cracked	71	Shimmering
22	Cutting	72	Shining
23	Dancing	73	Shiny
24	Dangerous	74	Silent
25	Disappearing	75	Silver
26	Dulled	76	Singing
27	Dusty	77	Skewering
28	Empty	78	Slashing
29	Enchanted	79	Spinning
30	Ethereal	80	Splendid
31	Fabulous	81	Splintering
32	Fearless	82	Split
33	Fearsome	83	Stabbing
34	Flaming	84	Stinging
35	Flawless	85	Stolen
36	Flying	86	Sturdy
37	Frail	87	Swinging
38	Fresh	88	Swirling
39	Frightening	89	Tarnished
40	Frosty	90	Tasty
41	Frozen	91	Tawdry
42	Furious	92	Turning
43	Glass	93	Twisted
44	Glorious	94	Unforgettable
45	Golden	95	Unremarkable
46	Grim	96	Vengeful
47	Gruesome	97	Vorpal
48	Handy	98	Wooden
49	Heavy	99	Weathered
50	Hefty	100	Whistling

Table T8:
PLACES
Roll 1d20

1	Battlement
2	Castle
3	Cave
4	Cove
5	Crypt
6	Den
7	Dungeon
8	Haven
9	Hall
10	Hideout
11	House
12	Keep
13	Labyrinth
14	Lair
15	Landing
16	Rookery
17	Temple
18	Tomb
19	Tower
20	Vault

Table T9:
ESTABLISHMENTS
Roll 1d10

1-2	Alehouse
3	Cookhouse
4-7	Inn
8-10	Tavern

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FRESH STARTS

20 Ways to Launch New Adventures

by Christopher Wilkes • illustrated by Terry Dykstra

You are all seated at the corner table in the local tavern, just about to raise your mugs to toast your new company of adventurers, when a stranger's shadow falls across the table. In the sudden silence, his sibilant voice is clear. "I would like to hire you for a job ..."

How many times have you seen campaigns begin with the tired cliché of a job offer? Yet the first session often sets the tone for an entire campaign. Wouldn't you rather have your next campaign explode with unexpected danger? When the plot suddenly twists, your players will be counting the days until your next session. Try something different, and your players will remember the start of that campaign long after their characters are dust or demigods.

To help kick-start your next campaign, here are twenty unusual hooks especially appropriate for the first adventure. They are grouped into four general categories. "Poof!" hooks suddenly drop the characters into an unexpected world. "Imprisoned" hooks place the characters into a position of instant danger, while in the "Castaways" hooks, the characters must overcome great adversity to get back home. Finally, the "Mystery" hooks place the characters in familiar surroundings with mysterious happenings.

P O O F !

1. WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE

Market day takes an exceptional turn when a bidding war between wizards erupts into a magical duel. While everyone is scrambling for cover, a spell engulfs the characters and a pushcart or two. Stranded in an unknown land, ignorant of the local language, and perhaps missing some equipment, the group faces a rocky road. The PCs will hope there is something good in those pushcarts.

2. THE TWILIGHT TOWER

The PCs awake in a large tower that stands alone amid a dreary marsh. They have amnesia yet retain skills, feats, spells, and abilities—but no personal knowledge, not even of each other. Suitable equipment for each PC is present, as are provisions for several months. If they leave the tower, they feel nauseous, and the farther they go the worse it gets. In the floor of the tower's lowest basement is a large and heavily barred trap door.

3. THE OTHER SIDE

The characters are siblings or cousins who have received a bequest from their deceased grandmother to be shared between them. Part of the bequest is a marvelously detailed tapestry of an exotic castle. The tapestry is a magical doorway through which they can come and go at will into the unknown kingdom it depicts.

4. DAWN OF THE LIVING DEAD

Oops, the PCs die! This works best if you stage a climactic battle or sink their ship in a hurricane. No matter how, they shuffle off this mortal coil. Then, suddenly, still shivering from the icy touch of their deaths, they're alive again. Wearing shrouds, they awake lying on marble slabs in a ruined temple. Nearby, a bejeweled gold medallion glitters in the still-smoking charred remains of a dead being.

5. GARDEN VARIETY HEROES

The PCs run afoul of a sorceress who turns her problems into decorative garden statuary. Centuries later, their old enemy is long gone, and the manse now belongs to another mage. His taste in statuary is different, and he reverses the spells because he has a mission for them:

"Your services will pay for the spells I used to bring you back," he says. "Now get cracking, and mind you don't leave any pigeon droppings on the rugs!"

6. A SURPRISE PARTY

It's a quiet night at the tavern. The PCs are almost alone in the common room. Just as they lift tankards for a toast to auspicious beginnings, a bright purple light floods the common room. A hole in the air above their table loudly tears open, and howling kobolds in dark cowled robes wielding blackened silver knives begin jumping through. They leap in three and four at a time until at least a score are present, all screaming and attacking everyone in sight. Regardless of the outcome of the melee, the jagged hole in the air does not go away. It continues to emit a glaring purple light, a strange spicy-smelling mist, and whatever else tickles the DM's fancy.

I M P R I S O N E D

7. THE GREAT ESCAPE

The PCs are prisoners chained together in a coffle and marching to a prison camp. A surprise attack by an enraged grizzly bear distracts the guards and kills enough of them before it dies that the PCs can overpower the rest. From overheard conversations, the group knows that the camp lies a few miles ahead. There, many other prisoners are under light guard. Do they dare to free the rest of the prisoners, or do they just run for the hills?

8. JAIL BREAK

For reasons best left to the players to invent, their PCs are residents of the city jail awaiting the dispensation of justice when fate intervenes. A severe earthquake shakes the building and collapses the walls of their cell and the jail. Not only are they free, but the city has far more to worry about than a few escapees. Fires have started, and looters are drifting through the shattered city.

9. NIGHTMARES

The PCs' beauty sleep is rudely interrupted when the roadside inn they're staying at comes under sudden attack. Raiders have set the inn afire and are slaughtering confused patrons as they stumble out. Awakened by the shouts, the PCs are surrounded by chaos and smoke, with sudden death awaiting without.

10. ROOMMATES

Each PC, new to the city and unacquainted with the other PCs, jumps at a great deal on a fantastic magic item. The problem is they've been conned by a slick operator and have all bought the same house. The con man and their money are gone when, on moving day, they all arrive with legal copies of the deed to the house. They must come to some agreement before the constabulary arrives, "tipped off" that the PCs were robbing the house.

CASTAWAYS

11. SWISS FAMILY CHARACTERS

A rough ocean voyage turns into a fight for life as the PCs' ship founders during a storm. The crew takes to the boats and disappears, abandoning the group. The sinking ship is driven upon rocks and starts to break up at the height of the storm's fury. The PCs are the only survivors, and they awake the next morning on the sands of a seemingly unpopulated island beach amid the flotsam and jetsam of their sundered ship.

12. INTERESTING TIMES

The characters are home, but home is in terrible trouble. An unstoppable coalition of evil humanoids smashes the local army and overruns the entire country before breaking up into clans fighting for the spoils. The PCs come back from a sojourn, only to find black smoke billowing from the local towns and internecine warfare rampant in the land.

13. THERE'S NO LIFE LIKE IT

As hired mercenaries, the PCs and their unit march through the night to join the main army. Out of nowhere they are ambushed by a vastly superior force. As the battle degenerates into screaming chaos, the PCs find themselves near its edge, right beside the wagon containing the paymaster's war chest! Of course, even if they do escape with it, their unit is destroyed; they are tired, lost, cut off from friendly forces, and deep inside a war zone.

14. EXILE

Sentenced to exile in the wastes of the Endless Sands for unknowingly transgressing the laws of the land, the PCs are forced out of the city. Behind them on the ramparts, a priest of the city's temple proclaims their crimes to the crowd inside the city, while soldiers close the great bronze gates. The sun beats upon the trackless dunes of the vast desert.

15. YES, MASTER

With a sudden mental snap, the PCs are aware that their surroundings have drastically changed. They find themselves scattered throughout an otherwise deserted mansion wearing strange outfits. They are dressed as cooks, maids, butlers, harem girls, or guards. Sprawled on the floor of the dining room, beside a spilled goblet of poisoned wine, is the body of a tall dark man. The last thing any of them remembers is that man saying, "I would like to hire you for a job."

MYSTERY

16. THE FUGITIVES

Lured to an isolated ruin a day's journey from town by an anonymous note promising a lucrative job, the PCs find no one. On the way back they spot a wanted poster for themselves! While away, they were framed for a crime they didn't commit, and now they have a price on their heads.

17. THE FORBIDDEN ZONE

During a trip by stagecoach, the PCs and their fellow travelers are suddenly paralyzed. Large apes appear and begin carrying off victims one by one. When only the PCs remain, bright flashes and the sound of combat come from outside the coach. The paralysis wears off, but there is no sign of the other travelers, the abductors, or their foes.

18. THE ENEMY OF MY FRIEND

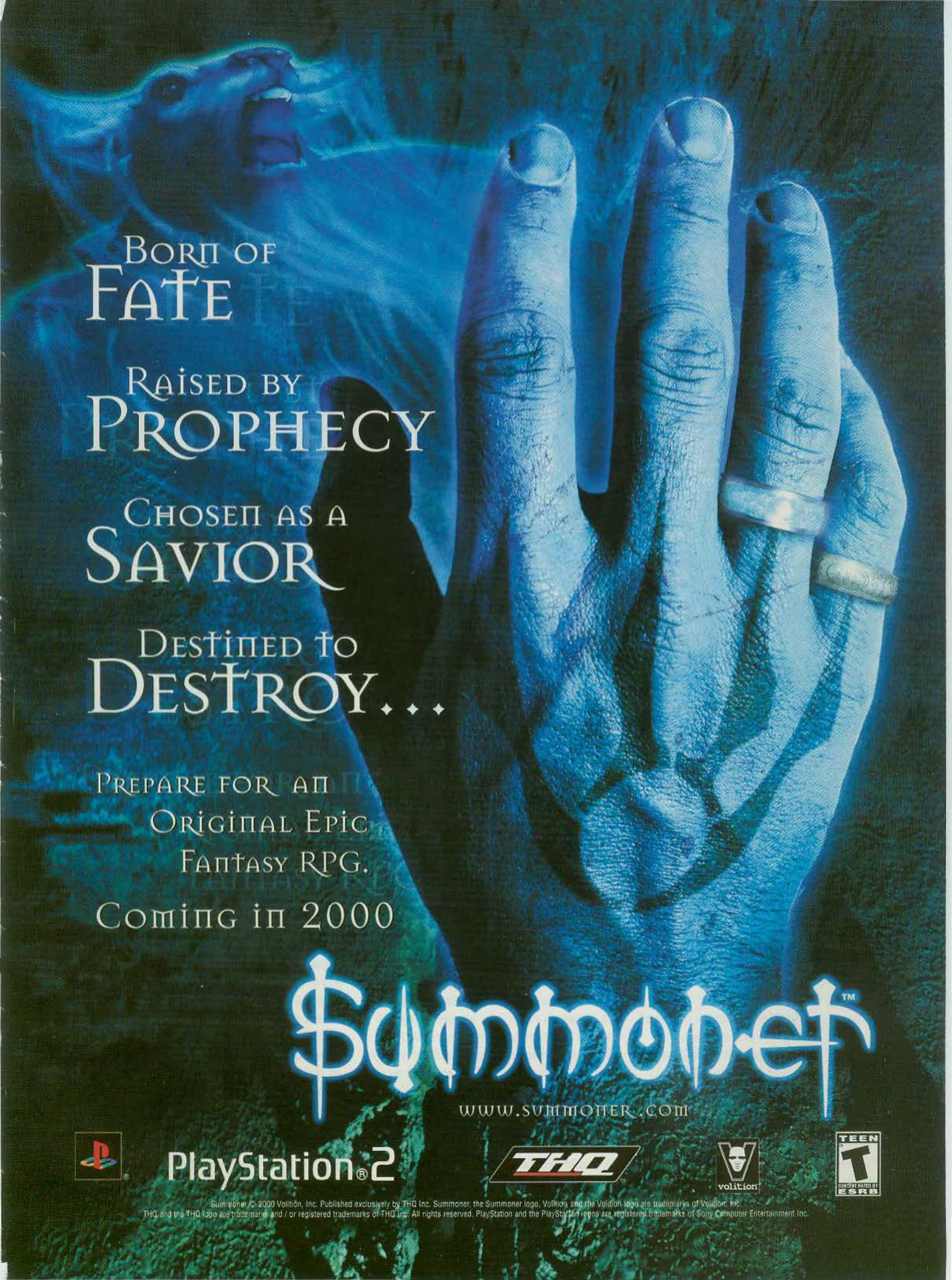
Invited to a friend's estate to celebrate her engagement, the PCs instead discover mayhem underway. Their friend is dead, and her fiancé is being pulled, kicking and screaming, through a magic portal by hulking humanoids. Delayed by a rearguard, the group has just enough time to follow before the portal closes. If they do, they exit at a lake over 20 leagues away, only to see the abductors aboard a boat already underway. Then the portal—the only way home—winks out of existence.

19. MURDER MOST FOUL

The PCs are all investors in the Blue Yonder mine. One by one, all the other investors have died in suspicious accidents. The group should rejoice, for they are now the sole owners. Of course, the rumors say the mine has a death curse on it, the Captain of the Civic Guard considers the PCs to be the prime suspects in the deaths of the other investors, and the real murderer considers them the next victims.

20. I KNOW WHAT YOU DID

Each PC receives a token of proof that someone knows about a very embarrassing or deadly secret in their pasts. Let the players each decide their PC's secret. Arriving singly at a clandestine pay-off meeting with the blackmailer (or possibly an ambush), the PCs discover a body with a stiletto in its back. D



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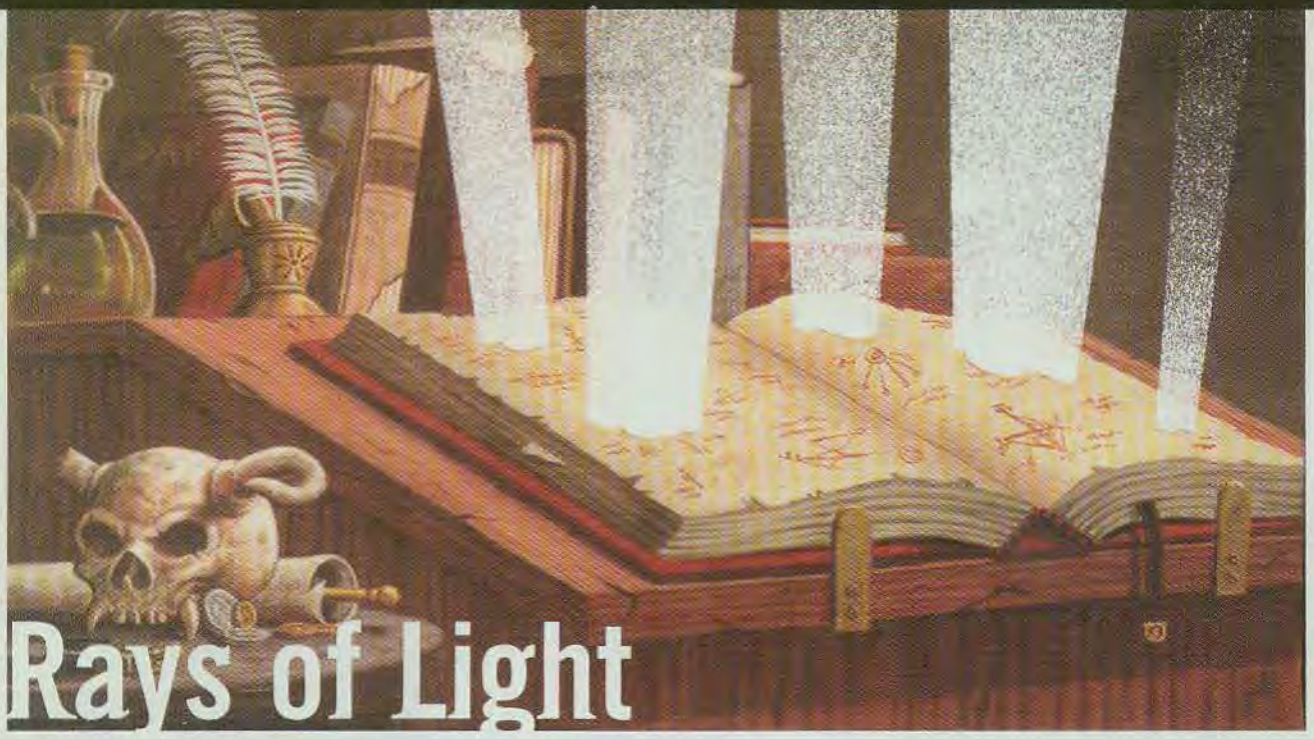

Rays of Light

by Stephen Schubert • illustrated by David Day

Meldar the Great, as he called himself, was one of the most powerful and evil ray-slinging sorcerers in history. He developed ray spells that were particularly suited to defeating those who tried to destroy him.

For the mighty warriors and paladins that came knocking on his tower door, Meldar created rays to drain their strength and resolve: *ray of weakness* and *ray of entropy*. Rival wizards sent their own creations, but their golems fell to his *ray of deanimation* before they crossed his drawbridge, and their hordes of undead were cut down by his *greater disrupt undead* rays. When the wizards deigned to show themselves, *rays of stupidity* would rain down to rob them of their best spells.

Meldar's power over the ray allowed him to refocus the energy of his spells. He could cause a ray to affect more than one target or appear as a cone of magical energy that affected everyone in its path. Even more alarming were the rumors of Meldar casting a ray spell that struck everyone around him.

Even if Meldar's rivals had defeated him, they would not have found his secrets. Meldar was a sorcerer, so he kept no spellbooks or research notes. His knowledge was his alone—until he crossed paths with Helvarian.

Helvarian Sihdenueven was a peaceful elven wizard. But when Meldar invaded and destroyed much of his homeland just to obtain some rare spell components, Helvarian vowed to see Meldar pay. The good elven mage knew he was no match for Meldar's power, so he became determined to find a weakness and exploit it. He dusted off his crystal ball and began to watch and learn.

Helvarian studied Meldar's habits and behaviors, but more importantly he studied Meldar's spells and casting methods. In addition to the above-mentioned spells, Helvarian witnessed the *rust ray*, the *targeting ray*, and the utilitarian *ray of light*. He saw Meldar affect the abilities of his foes with *ray of clumsiness* and *ray of sickness*.

He took detailed notes on every spell, and in time his understanding of the theories and applications of ray spells surpassed even that of Meldar. Helvarian then designed ray spells of his own, including the *stun ray*, *sting ray*, *distracting ray*, and the *ray of dizziness*. Once he understood the ray's mechanics, it was a relatively simple matter to create the perfect defense: reflection. He was able to implement different *rays of reflection* specifically designed to combat ray effects.

Of course, during the years that Meldar was being studied he continued to grow in power. Helvarian knew that he could not face Meldar directly and hope to win, nor was that ever his goal. Helvarian instead compiled his notes and carefully made three copies. He bound each copy into a book and sent them to three of Meldar's strongest foes.

Only Helvarian's spellbook contains all of the spells that were documented and researched. These spells and his notes were bound into one large tome, fully one hand thick when closed. The cover and spine were carved from a fallen oak tree, and then protected by black gorgon leather. Embossed in gold on the spine is the title, in Elven, *Rays of Light*. The pages have varying looks to them, ranging from fine parchment covered in Helvarian's notes to the rare pages holding the final spells. The book has no lock or clasp.

The three copies made for Meldar's enemies detail the workings of the ray, but each of them contains less than half of the full body of work (some spells appear in more than one copy). The covers are made of 1/8-inch thick elven steel, polished to a mirrorlike finish. The tomes are enchanted to protect against rust and the elements. Inscribed on the cover in flowing Elven is the same title as the original work: *Rays of Light*. The spine is elven steel as well, with golden hinges riveted to the spine and covers. The pages are finely pressed and treated bark from an ancient stand of aspen trees. They are filled with words in the flowing hand of Helvarian; every-

thing is written in Elven except where the arcane language is used. The books each have exactly 91 pages, with 80 pages of spells and 11 pages of notes detailing ray spells and how to enhance them. Holding each book closed is an intricately designed lock made of gold and elven steel. The lock, however, is a ruse and has no mechanical means of opening. Instead, the expectant reader must intone, "Meldar the Great?" phrased as a question—a bit of a joke on the part of Helvarian. Once the words are spoken, the lock opens with a click.

It is believed that one of the copies was destroyed during a failed attempt to defeat Meldar. A second copy never made it to its destination, as a red dragon allegedly waylaid the tome's courier. The third copy, whose contents are presented here, was passed from its wizard owner to his apprentice, then to his apprentice, and so on. It is well worn from two hundred years of use.

1ST-LEVEL SPELLS

Ray of Clumsiness

Transmutation
Level: Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

A crackling ray leaps from the caster's outstretched hand, requiring a successful ranged touch attack to hit. The energy of the ray stiffens the target's muscles and joints, making it more difficult for the target to move. The subject suffers a -1d6 enhancement penalty to Dexterity, with an additional -1 per two caster levels (maximum additional penalty of -5). This subject's Dexterity score cannot drop below 1.

Ray of Flame

Evocation [Flame]
Level: Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None (see text)
Spell Resistance: Yes

A burning ray shoots out at the target; with a successful ranged touch attack, it deals 1d6 points of fire damage, plus 1 point per caster level (up to +5). If the target or its equipment is flammable, the target must also make a Reflex save or catch fire, taking 1d6 points of fire damage the following round.

Focus: a small, polished glass lens.

Ray of Light

Evocation [Light]
Level: Brd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Cone of light or ray
Duration: 10 minutes/level (D) or instantaneous
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: See text

A narrow cone of light is emitted from the caster's palm. This light provides illumination equivalent in intensity to a torch.

Instead of the sustained light, the spell can be focused into a short ray and directed at the eyes of a target. If the caster succeeds at a ranged touch attack, the subject is blinded for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude save negates and spell resistance applies). A blind character, in addition to the obvious effects, suffers a 50% miss chance in combat (all opponents have full concealment), loses any Dexterity bonus to AC, grants a +2 bonus to attackers' attack rolls (they are effectively invisible), moves at half speed, and suffers a -4 penalty on most Strength- and Dexterity-based skills.

Stun Ray

Conjuration (Creation) [Electricity]
Level: Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 round plus 1d4 rounds
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

A quick jolt of electricity darts from the caster to the target. This ray of electricity requires a successful ranged touch attack to hit. The target is stunned by the ensuing shock for one round and an additional 1d4 rounds unless a successful Fortitude save is made.

Material component: a coiled copper wire.

Targeting Ray

Divination
Level: Brd 1, Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: One action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

The caster creates a luminous ray that, with a successful ranged touch attack, pulsates between the target and the caster. The ray acts as a rangefinder for the caster and any allies within 20 feet of her. It provides a +1 insight bonus per three caster levels to all ranged attacks at the target for the duration of the spell. The caster's allies need not see the caster, but they must be able to see the ray. The caster can otherwise act normally for the duration of the spell. Allies who can see the target receive the bonus even if the caster loses line of sight.

Focus: a small metal or stone tube.

2ND-LEVEL SPELLS

Distracting Ray

Abjuration
Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This ray attempts to undo magic as it is being cast. Used in the same manner as a counterspell (as a readied action), the ray interferes with the manipulation of divine or arcane magic by dazzling the target with bizarre swirling and flashing lights. If the ray successfully strikes a spellcaster (ranged touch attack roll required), and that spellcaster is in the process of casting a spell, then the target spellcaster must make a Concentration check to avoid losing his spell. The DC of the Concentration check is equal to the save DC of the *distracting ray* (12 + caster's relevant ability modifier) + spell level of the spell the target is casting + 1/level of the

caster. Thus, if a 3rd-level wizard with an Intelligence of 16 attempts to cast a *distracting ray* on a sorcerer casting a *fireball* spell, the sorcerer would need to make a Concentration check with a DC of 21 (15 [*distracting ray's* save DC] + 3 [*fireball's* spell level] + 3 [wizard's level]).

Ray of Dizziness

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

The ray from this spell shoots toward the target in a spiraling corkscrew. If the ranged touch attack is successful and the saving throw is failed, then the target experiences strong feelings of vertigo and is considered to be staggered. Staggered characters can only take partial actions when they could normally take standard actions. In addition, affected characters suffer a -2 penalty to AC, melee attack rolls, melee damage rolls, and Reflex saves.

Focus: a small top.

Ray of Sickness

Necromancy
Level: Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

With a successful ranged touch attack, a sickly green ray strikes the target. The ray makes the target temporarily nauseated. Nauseated characters are unable to attack, cast or concentrate on spells, or do anything else requiring attention. The only action an affected character can take is a single move (or a move-equivalent action) per round.

Ray of Ice

Evocation [Cold]
Level: Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: See text
Spell Resistance: Yes

A cyan ray beams from the caster's fingertips and, with a successful ranged touch attack, hits the target. If used as a simple attack, the ray inflicts 1d6 points of cold damage for every 2 levels of the caster, to a maximum of 5d6 at 10th level. A Fortitude save halves the damage.

Alternatively, the ray can be used to encase objects or targets in ice. A sword could be frozen in its scabbard, feet frozen to the floor, and so on. Freezing an item or a creature still requires a successful ranged touch attack, and creatures are allowed a Reflex saving throw to avoid being trapped. Freeing encased items (including feet) is a standard action and requires a Strength check with a DC equal to the spell's save DC. A creature whose feet are frozen to the floor receives no Dexterity bonus to AC and incurs a -2 penalty to attack rolls.

If used on a body of water, the spell freezes a circular area with a diameter in feet equal to the caster's level (maximum of 10 feet diameter), to a thickness of the caster's level in inches (maximum 10 inches).

Material Component: snow, ice, or melted snow or ice.

Ray of Stupidity

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

With a successful ranged touch attack, a bright yellow beam strikes the target. The ray temporarily reduces the subject's Intelligence with an enhancement penalty of -1d4, with an additional -1 per two caster levels, to a maximum additional penalty of -5. The spell cannot reduce Intelligence below 1. If the target is a wizard, she might temporarily lose the ability to cast some or all of her spells if her Intelligence score drops too low. The ability to cast those (prepared) spells returns at the expiration of the spell.

Material Component: a miniature cone-shaped hat.

3RD-LEVEL SPELLS

Minor Reflection

Abjuration
Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: One action
Range: Personal
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

As the spell is cast, a brief shimmering appears around the caster. For the duration of the spell, the caster is protected against ranged touch attacks, including ray spells and creature ray attacks. Any ranged touch attack directed at the caster is automatically reflected back at the original caster.

Focus: a glass prism.

Rust Ray

Transmutation
Level: Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Target: One non-magical ferrous object or one ferrous creature
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

With a successful ranged touch attack, this russet ray corrodes metal that it touches. It can effectively destroy any nonmagical iron or iron alloy object. Such objects struck by the *rust ray* take 2d6 points of damage +1 per two caster levels (maximum +10), ignoring hardness. The caster can also target a weapon being wielded or metal armor being worn. Metal armor affected by this ray takes normal damage from the spell and loses 1d4 points of Armor Class through corrosion. If a weapon is reduced to 0 hit points, it is destroyed. Ferrous creatures struck by the ray take the same damage as objects.

Magic items can negate the effect with a successful Fortitude saving throw. (See page 136 in the *PH* for details.)

Material Component: rust dust or a piece of a rust monster.

Sting Ray

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, M

Possession is Everything

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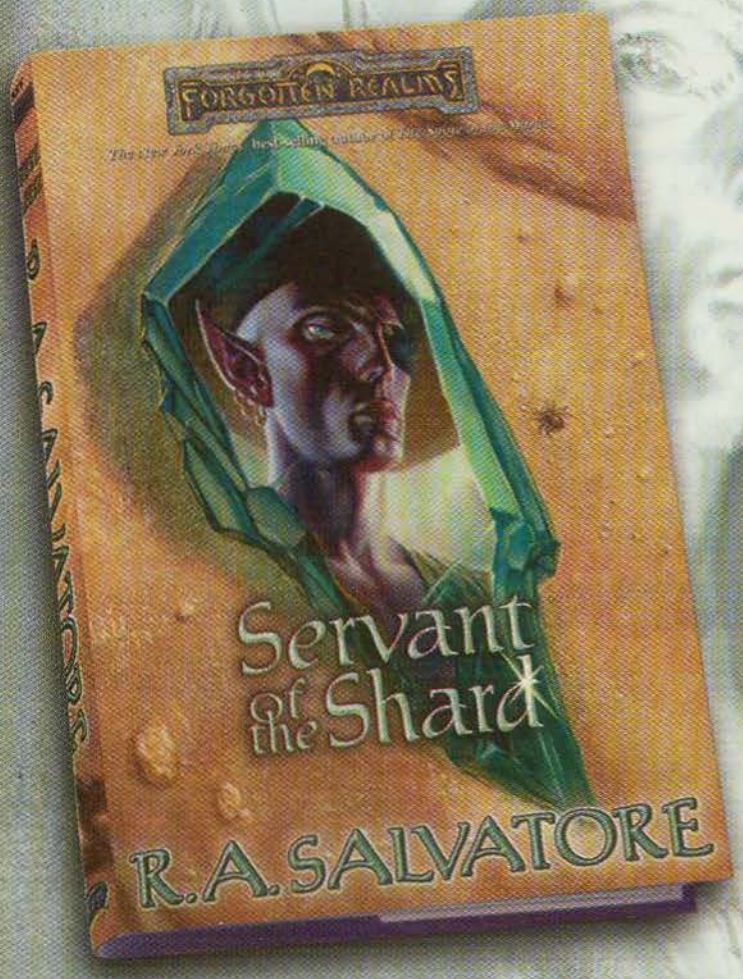

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Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

When this ray successfully strikes, it creates a sensation of many tiny insects biting and crawling on the victim's body. The target can attempt a Will save each round to shake off the effects. Until the spell is shrugged off, the victim is hampered by the unsettling feeling of all the stinging and biting and is staggered, able only to perform a partial action each round. The victim also suffers a -2 penalty to AC. If the victim attempts to cast a spell, she must succeed at a Concentration check with a DC equal to the *sting ray's* DC + the level of the spell the target is attempting to cast. So, if a 6th-level sorcerer with a 16 Charisma casts *sting ray* on a wizard casting a *fireball,* the Concentration check DC is 19 (16 [*sting ray* DC] + 3 [*fireball* spell level]).

Material component: four dried stinging insects (bees, spiders, and so on).

Greater Disrupt Undead

Necromancy
Level: Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell works as the cantrip *disrupt undead,* except that this ray causes 1d6 points of damage per caster level to any undead, to a maximum of 10d6. If part of the damage is sufficient to destroy the first undead, then the ray continues through that target to strike at any undead behind. This process continues until all damage is dealt. The caster must succeed at a separate ranged touch attack for each target. For example, a 5th-level wizard casting *greater disrupt undead* at a group of zombies succeeds at his ranged touch attack and deals 18 points of damage. The first zombie has only 16 hit points, so the zombie behind it takes the last 2 points of damage if the caster succeeds at another ranged touch attack.

Ray of Weakness

Necromancy
Level: Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: See text
Saving Throw: Fortitude half
Spell Resistance: Yes

A dark ray drains the strength of its target, if a successful ranged touch attack is made. The target suffers 2d6 points of Strength damage +1 per two caster levels, to a maximum of 2d6 + 10 at 20th level. If the target succeeds at a Fortitude saving throw, she takes only half damage.

Ray of Deanimation

Abjuration
Level: Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Target: One construct
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will half
Spell Resistance: Yes

This ray interferes with magical animation, degenerating the magic bound within constructs and effectively causing damage. With a successful ranged touch attack, the ray causes 1d6 points of damage per caster level to constructs, to a maximum of 10d6.

5TH-LEVEL SPELLS

Ray of Entropy

Necromancy
Level: Sor/Wiz 5
Components: V, S
Casting Time: One action
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect: Ray
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude half (see text)
Spell Resistance: Yes

With a successful ranged touch attack, a ray of negative energy consumes the life energy of the target, making the target weaker, slower, and less healthy. The target must make a Fortitude saving throw if the caster succeeds at a ranged touch attack. If the saving throw fails, the target suffers a -4 effective decrease to Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity for the duration of the spell.

NEW FEATS

Feat	Type	Prerequisite
Ray Burst	Metamagic	–
Ray Coning	Metamagic	–
Ray Extension	Metamagic	–
Ray Focus	General	–
Ray Splitting	Metamagic	–

Ray Burst [Metamagic]

You change the effect of a ray spell to a 30-foot radius burst centered on yourself.

Benefit: A ray burst hits all targets (friend or foe) within 10 feet. Targets within 30 feet are allowed a Reflex save to avoid the burst. Any targets that do not avoid the effect are treated as if they were hit by the ray spell. Any target with 100% cover with respect to the caster is not affected. A ray burst spell uses up a spell slot three levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Ray Coning [Metamagic]

You expand a ray spell to a 30-foot cone.

Benefit: All targets in the area of effect receive Reflex saves to avoid the effect, but are otherwise affected as if they were hit by the ray spell. A coned ray uses up a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Ray Extension [Metamagic]

You maintain a ray spell for an additional round.

Benefit: When the extended ray spell is cast, you can use your next action to attack with the same ray. You can designate either a different target or the same target. A successful ranged touch attack is required for the second target. If any other actions are taken, or the spell is disrupted before your next action, then you lose the extended spell (though any previous effects remain). An extended ray uses up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

Ray Focus [General]

Your ray spells are more effective than normal.

Benefit: Add +2 to the DC for all saving throws against all ray spells that you cast.

Special: The effects of this feat stack with the effects of the Spell Focus feat.

Ray Splitting [Metamagic]

You can attack three adjacent targets with a ray spell.

Benefit: A split ray can hit three targets. A successful ranged touch attack is needed for each target, and each roll incurs a -4 penalty to hit. A target cannot be attacked more than once with a given spell. A split ray uses up a spell slot two levels higher than the spell's actual level.

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SECRETS of the MASTER SMITHS

by Christian Paul McLeod • illustrated by Arnie Swekel

If magic remains a mysterious and rarely-mastered force, then enchanted weapons are undoubtedly few and far-between. A *+1 longsword* becomes a major find, and special weapons like keen or flaming short swords or a *+2 longsword bane vs. giants* become once-in-a-lifetime acquisitions—the D&D campaign equivalent of Excalibur.

Of course, player characters always search for any advantage in combat. The scarcity of magic weapons inspires weaponsmiths to hone their skills in creating weapons of exceptional quality, or to experiment with alloys or technologies to create more powerful weapons. Adamantine and meteoric iron are well known for their use in weapons and armor, and other materials such as silver are known to be particularly effective against certain creatures.

TABLE 1: WEAPON MODIFICATION COSTS

Modification	Bonus; notes	Market Price
Lenaer wood	-25% weight, +10 ft. to range increment for ranged weapons	+10 gp per pound of item's normal weight
Mindsteel	+4 to Will saving throws vs. mind-influencing effects; weight increased by 25%; less-effective AC bonus (normal bonus -2), armor check penalty increased by one	+9000 gp
Vakar	+2d6 damage to elves	+8,000 gp
"Breakaway" weapons	reduced carrying size; threat on natural 20 only	+1,000 gp
Copper-adamantite alloy	weapon damage 1d8, 1d10, or 1d12: +1 damage	+4,500 gp
Slug crystal[1]	-25% weight	+500 gp
Quicksilver/iron-filled[2]	+2 to damage	+5,000 gp

1 Ranged weapons crafted of this material are ruined after one use. Melee weapons are somewhat more durable, but each successful hit in melee combat leaves a significant notch, dent, or similar imperfection and reduces the damage modifier by 1 (to +1, 0, -1, and so on). Any hit that inflicts no damage as a result of these modifiers indicates that the weapon has shattered and is beyond repair.

2 Maces, morningstars, hammers, and other items with larger striking areas remain the easiest to construct, and receive the full +2 damage bonus. Items such as swords or battleaxes require much greater skill, imposing a -10 penalty to a weaponsmith's roll to create such an item. Furthermore, the limited volume of material that can be used to fill such a weapon limits the damage bonus to +1. Small items like daggers and arrowheads cannot be created using this process.

NEW METALS AND MATERIALS

Campaign worlds are vast, and the secrets of new metals that can be used to forge unique weapons are just waiting to be found. These secrets might be held closely by dwarven forgers deep underground, or they might be discovered by an alchemist on accident.

Other characters might call upon their nonhuman allies to share the secrets of elven steel or the dwarven "orcslayer" metal suggested in the *City of Ravens Bluff* accessory. Conversely, they might take on the research for new "super-metals" themselves.

LENAER WOOD

Elven smiths turn to their forest homes to make use of unique woods in their weapons. Lenaer trees (easily identified by their swirling gray bark, sweet sap, and thick-veined leaves shaped like seven-pointed stars) are the only source of this special wood. Lenaer wood is pale and extremely light (akin to balsa wood), and it is often used by elves for simple artistic carving. When properly cured, however, lenaer wood is extremely durable while remaining lightweight. Weapons of lenaer wood—typically staves and bows—weigh 25% less than ordinary weapons. Ranged weapons such as spears and arrows constructed of lenaer enjoy a 10-foot bonus to their range increment. For example, the range increment of a shortbow shooting linear arrows would be 70 feet instead of 60 feet.

Lenaer wood adds 10 gp per pound to the cost of items made with it, using the item's normal (non-lenaer) weight as a guide. A quiver of lenaer arrows costs 31 gp, for example.

MINDSTEEL

Miners might run across the extremely rare mokklor or "mindsteel" metal. It is a soft, dull-gray metal sometimes used in the construction of armor. Mokklor resembles lead and shares many of that metal's physical properties (including a low melting point and extreme malleability). Armor formed of mindsteel weighs 25% more than normal. (Increase the armor check penalty by one.) It offers less of an AC bonus (by two)

compared to steel armors of the same type. For example, mokklor full plate offers a +6 armor bonus instead of the normal +8, weighs 62 pounds instead of 50 pounds, and has an armor check penalty of -7 instead of -6. The benefit of mindsteel armor is that it naturally dampens mind-influencing effects targeting the wearer. Mindsteel provides the wearer with a +4 circumstance bonus to Will saving throws vs. such effects.

VAKAR

Enterprising adventurers who probe the depths of the dwarves' mountain homes might come across a vein of vakar. This durable bluish-black metal can withstand extreme heat during the tempering process and exudes a strange oil. Weapons made with vakar metal receive a +1 bonus to damage. Furthermore, the oil exuded by vakar is caustic to those of pure elven blood, raising painful welts and dealing +2d6 points of damage to elves.

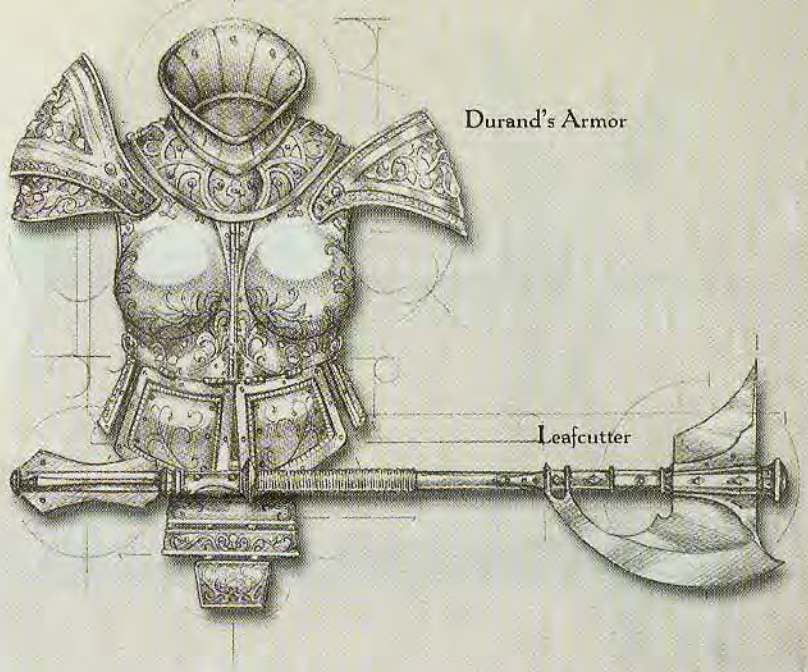
MASTERWORK WEAPONS

The following items have been created using materials like these, combined with advanced techniques in weapon construction. Although each provides bonuses in combat, these bonuses are due solely to exceptional material or workmanship rather than enchantment.

DURAND'S ARMOR

Roman Durand was a human armorsmith of unsurpassed skill; the dwarves of the nearby mountains considered him an honorary dwarf in appreciation of his talents. When Roman's daughter Isabel expressed a desire to seek adventure, Roman resolved to create a suit of armor that would protect her even away from home. He persuaded Isabel to postpone her departure for a year, asking the dwarves to train her with the battleaxe and crossbow while he worked on a masterpiece.

Roman's dwarven friends provided the smith with several bars of dull gray metal that they had unearthed in an ancient dwarven temple. They suspected the metal had special properties and invited Roman to use it when constructing his daughter's armor. He alloyed the dwarven metal with steel and a small amount of gold (for color), and lovingly crafted a suit of intricate full plate.



Durand's Armor is sized for a human female and is engraved with intertwining vines laden with lilies. When Isabel returned from her exploits years later, she was the sole survivor of an attack by mind flayers and credited her "lucky armor" for her safe return.

The gray metal the dwarves provided was actually mindsteel, and that metal's properties enabled Isabel to survive the illithid attack that claimed her companions. The alloy developed by Roman was unique and as durable as regular steel—eliminating the penalty to Armor Class normally associated with mindsteel armor—but the impurity of the mindsteel affected the psionic properties of the metal. Thus, Durand's Armor has an armor bonus of +8 but provides only a +2 circumstance bonus to Will saving throws vs. mind-influencing effects.

Market price: 11,800 gp

LEAFCUTTER

Leafcutter is a battleaxe forged of an unusual bluish-silver metal with a perpetually oily sheen. The haft is carved from the thighbone of a fire giant, and the grip has been wrapped with a fine steel chain. Minute etchings along one of the axe's double edges appear to be runes, though closer inspection reveals that they are merely a series of hash marks: There are forty-seven in all.

The weapon was forged centuries ago during a heated war between the elves and the dwarves. It was presented as a gift to the human general Xenos, who led his mercenary army against the elven forces and single-handedly defeated dozens of the finest elven warlords (one for each hash mark on the blade). When the elves and the dwarves finally united against the common threat of a goblinoid invasion, Xenos' army turned on both races to side with the goblins. The forces of evil were ultimately turned back, and the traitorous general was killed and his weapon lost during the pitched battle.

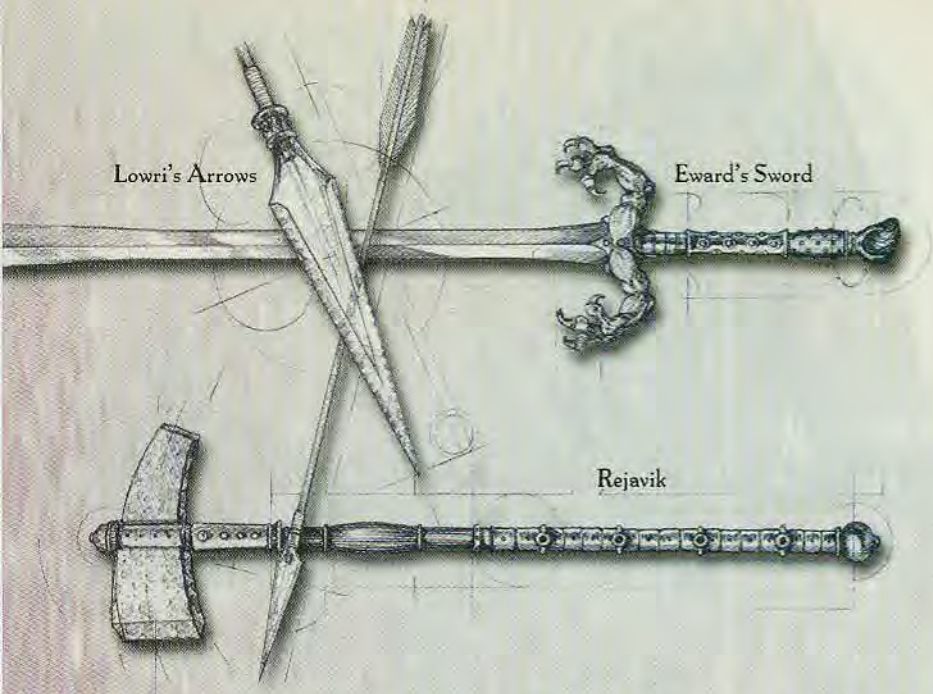
The metallic part of the axe constantly seeps a clear, odorless oil that is corrosive to elven skin. Merely touching the oil causes painful burns and blisters, while wounds inflicted with the weapon burn fiercely.

Leafcutter provides a +1 bonus to hit as a result of its exceptional balance and edge. It is forged of vakar alloyed with silver, and retains the effectiveness of both metals. Because of the vakar metal, Leafcutter also receives a +1 bonus to damage. When attacking elves (not half-elves), Leafcutter inflicts an additional 2d6 points of damage. The vakar-silver alloy is called "vereel" by the dwarves, and it is as effective as pure silver against creatures with an intolerance for that metal.

Market price: 11,315 gp.

EWARD'S SWORD

The warrior Eward (a 7-foot beast of a man from the wicked berserker tribes of distant badlands) was the failed project of several ambitious priests of the god of justice. The priests lured Eward to their city with promises of rigorous warrior training and glorious battles to come. They had intended to educate



Eward, augment his considerable combat skills with the finest fencing instructors available, and present their "converted" paladin to their superiors.

Ultimately, their project failed. Eward learned as much as he could from the priests and the half-dozen swordsmen hired to train him. When he felt they had nothing more to offer, Eward turned on the priests, sacking their temple and leaving the city to become one of the most feared mercenaries in the land.

Like his clansmen, Eward was highly suspicious of magic, but he wanted a superior, even unique, weapon. When he had amassed a small fortune as a hired sword, he commissioned a special non-magic weapon from an aging dark elf who lived as a hermit in the mountains of the north. The drow weaponsmith created an immense greatsword for Eward, a blade of sickly green metal with a hilt of blackened steel. The pommel consisted of a large bloodstone, and the crossguards resembled muscular arms culminating in grasping claws. The weapon could be disassembled and carried in a special case that appeared to house a simple lute. The sword is designed to broken down into four pieces: The blade separates halfway along its length into two interlocking sections, and the bloodstone pommel unscrews to permit the grip and crossguards to detach and slide away from the tang of the blade. The sword is expertly designed and precisely counter-balanced to protect the delicate mechanisms that hold it together—but the sword still suffers in combat. Eward's sword only threatens a critical hit on a natural 20, though it is still subject to a feat (such as Improved Critical) and spells (such as *keen edge*) that affect critical ranges.

The exceptional quality of Eward's Sword provides a +1 bonus to attack rolls. The green metal used to create the blade is an alloy of adamantine and copper; its exceptional temper provides a +1 bonus to damage. It takes a full-round action to assemble or disassemble the sword.

Market price: 4,850 gp.

LOWRI'S ARROWS

In the annals of elven history, there might be no greater archer than the warrior-maiden Lowri. Though she is remembered for her considerable skill, she is also known for the unique arrows she created.

Lowri's arrow shafts are crafted from pale wood that is lightweight and sturdy, while the arrowheads appear to be crafted from honey-colored amber. The arrowheads are thicker at the base than most but taper to razor-sharp serrated edges and a lethal point. The fletching of the arrows is nearly twice as long as one would expect and crafted from thin, nearly transparent segments of the same material used in the arrowheads.

The material Lowri used to create the fletching and arrowheads was harvested from a nest of blind cave slugs. These creatures are 6 inches long and unintelligent, but reasonably friendly (as slugs go). Thick trails of crystallized golden slime coat the floor, walls, and ceilings of the slugs' nest, and this material can be scraped away, heated to a low melting point, and used as a lightweight substitute for some metals. The items produced are a rich golden color and capable of holding an edge, though they are somewhat brittle.

Lowri used lenaer wood to craft the shafts of the arrows, so these missiles increase the ranges at which they can be accurately fired as described above. Such arrows also receive a +1 bonus to attack rolls, as the length and aerodynamic nature of the fletching and arrowheads increases the arrows' accuracy.

Market price: 63 gp per 20 arrows

REJAVIK

Created by the legendary dwarven smith Athdar Steelbreaker, Rejavik is a warhammer, surprisingly light for its larger-than-normal size. The haft is carved of black wood, half again as long and thick as a standard warhammer. The head itself is twice normal size and constructed of iron. Thick leather wraps the lower half of the haft, and beneath these wrappings runic carvings identify the weapon's name and creator. It weighs no more than an ordinary warhammer (8 pounds).

The head of the hammer is actually crafted of two separate pieces, expertly joined so that the seam can only be detected with a successful Search skill check (DC 25). The head is hollow and the cavity is half-filled with a mixture of iron filings and quicksilver. The hammer's unique design enables the wielder to deliver blows of incredible might.

When Rejavik is swung, the quicksilver and iron filings fill the upper portion of the hammerhead, increasing the speed at which the hammer is swung through the air. When the hammer strikes, this mixture is flung forward, filling the front half of the head and increasing the impact of the blow, granting a +2 bonus to damage.

Market price: 1,600 gp.

NEW CREATIONS

Many of the modifications described above can be incorporated into other weapons. The costs appear on **Table 1: Weapon Modification Costs.** All cost modifiers are cumulative, so a masterwork longsword created from slug crystal and filled with quicksilver and iron filings has a total cost modifier of +5,800.

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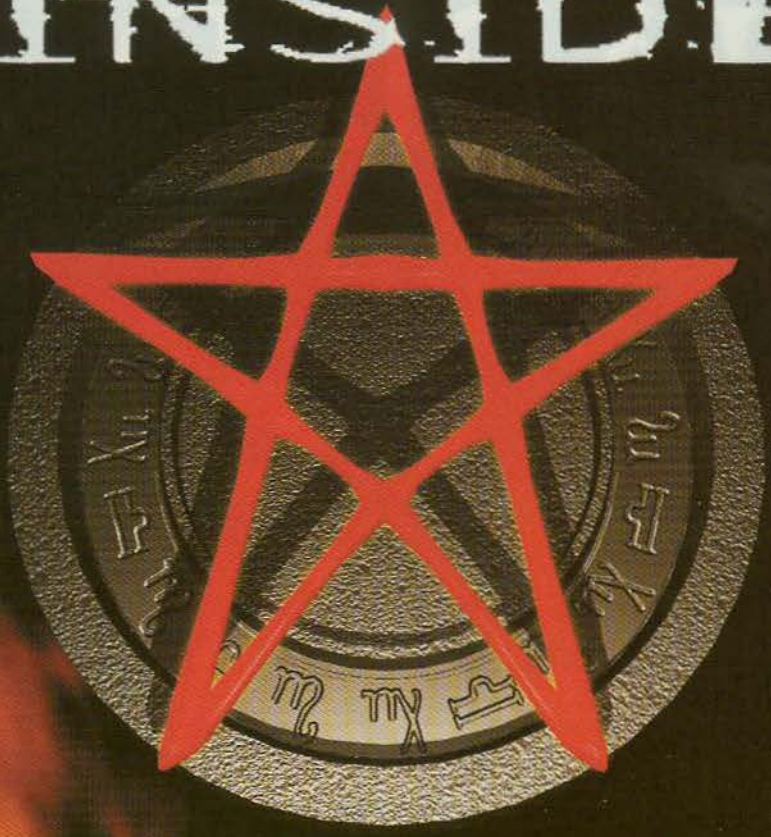

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CHILDREN OF THARIZDUN

by James Jacobs · illustrated by Paolo Parente

Untold centuries ago, there existed a terrible cult of depravity whose only goals were to spread fear, despair, and insanity to the rest of the world. This cult comprised hundreds of chapters scattered across the Flanaess, yet they were unified in their devotion to their Dark God: Tharizdun. Eventually the evils of the Cult of Tharizdun grew too much for its enemies to bear, and the Dark God was imprisoned in a different dimension. Yet the Dark God's legacy remains. Mere mention of his name can send chills down the spine of even the bravest adventurer.

Today, the Cult of Tharizdun is all but extinct. After their god's imprisonment, the various cults rapidly succumbed to internal strife. The Scarlet Brotherhood has been known to use the Dark God's name as a threat, but how much they truly know about him is anyone's guess. At its height, the Cult maintained dozens of huge, gothic temples throughout the world. Most of these temples were concentrated in the Yatil Mountains, but in the months after the Dark Gods' banishment many of them were destroyed. They exist now only as ruins, often serving as lairs for creatures unsuspecting of the history of their homes.

A more concrete and menacing legacy of the time of Tharizdun are the various creatures the cult used as guardians and minions. At its height, the cult was notorious for the use of these terrible and unique monsters. Since the cult's demise, most of these monsters have died off.

The least of these creatures is the kurge, a vile undead being originally created to serve as a temple guardian. The captured bodies of powerful enemies who opposed the cult were often transformed into kurge and returned to their homelands to spread fear and disease. Another undead creation of the cult was the destructive rotripper. An animated ogre corpse, this creature could actually absorb and utilize the arms of its victims as its own.

Perhaps the most infamous of the beasts is the julajimus. These monsters were too dangerous for the cult to keep nearby, so they were often magically transported into the wilderness near small villages or towns where they could wreak incredible devastation in a short period of time.

Finally, there are the rogue eidolons. These constructs were the pride and joy of the cult. When a chapter had especially pleased Tharizdun, the Dark God would invest one of the temple statues with a portion of divine power, causing the thing to transform into a potent guardian and advisor. These eidolons possessed incredible intelligence and wisdom, but the imprisonment of their god drove them insane with rage and hatred. Many of these rogue eidolons destroyed their cult cells before wandering off into the surrounding wilderness.

This is but a sample of the various beasts associated with Tharizdun. Who knows what terrible fiends still lurk in undiscovered cult temples from the time of the Dark God?

Julajimus

A julajimus stands a bit more than 18 feet tall and looks vaguely like a massive baboon. Its arms are long and muscular, with four fully articulated joints each. The body is covered with dark blue or black fur, and it has a large blue reptilian tail. The mouth of a julajimus is disproportionally large for the head and is filled with razor-sharp teeth the size of scimitar blades.

Villagers often tell stories of the julajimus to their children. At some point in the story, the main character, a child, takes in a cute animal as a pet despite repeated warnings from their parents that there isn't enough food or room to house the creature. The story ends with the rebellious child hiding the critter in his room, only to have it turn into a julajimus one night and eat him alive. In fact, the name "julajimus" is derived from an ancient phrase "jul ajimolus," or "eater of children."

The julajimus is territorial, gathering in pairs only once a decade to mate. The presence of a julajimus has a strange effect on nearby wildlife, causing animals to become more aggressive than normal. Increased attacks on domestic animals by wildlife can indicate the arrival of a julajimus. The monster is not afraid of civilization, and the lights of a village at night can attract a curious julajimus to investigate.

Ancient texts hint that, in times long past, the cult of Tharizdun created the first julajimus from human prisoners. While these text don't indicate what the purpose of the julajimus is, it seems clear that they were created for one purpose: to spread fear in the hearts of the non-believers.

Combat

The julajimus enjoys the sensation of gnawing living creatures and always attacks with its bite first. It follows with slashes from its two claws. Despite its size, the julajimus is terrifyingly fast and can easily outrun most prey.

Cause Panic (Su): A julajimus radiates a supernatural aura that can chill the blood of the bravest warrior. Any living creature within 20 feet of a julajimus must make a Will save (DC 20) or succumb to panic. Those who save successfully are immune to this ability for 24 hours. Panicked victims are frozen motionless in fear; each round a new saving throw can be attempted to throw off this effect.

Stunning Attack (Su): If a julajimus successfully scores a critical hit with its claws, the victim must make a Fortitude save (DC 19) or be stunned by the force of the blow. Stunned victims cannot act and lose any positive Dexterity bonus to AC, while attackers get a +2 bonus on attack rolls against a stunned opponent. The victim of a stunning attack remains stunned for 1d4 rounds.

Roar (Su): Three times a day, a julajimus can roar out Tharizdun's name; this roar can be heard for miles. All creatures within 60 feet must make a Fortitude save (DC 19) or become deafened for 3d6 hours. Those who fail this saving throw also suffer 6d6 points of subdual damage.

Immunities (Ex): A julajimus is immune to all spells of the Enchantment school.

Resistance (Ex): A julajimus has fire resistance 20.

Polymorph Self (Su): The most notorious ability of the julajimus is its power to polymorph itself at will into a small, cuddly creature (such as a rabbit,

chipmunk, or kitten). This allows the julajimus to lull its prey into a false sense of security before it shifts into its natural form to attack. Reverting to its true form is a free action.

Vulnerable to Sunlight (Su): A julajimus becomes paralyzed when exposed to sunlight. Each round, it can make a Fortitude save (DC 20) to resist paralysis. Once it is paralyzed, the creature is completely helpless (although its damage reduction and fire resistance still make it difficult to kill) and can be attacked in relative safety. The monster is completely aware of its surroundings during this time; it is simply powerless to act. The paralysis lasts for 1d4 rounds after the exposure to sunlight ends.

JULAJIMUS

Huge Aberration

Hit Dice	16d8+80 (152 hp)
Initiative	+2 (Dex)
Speed	50 ft.
AC	AC: 22 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +12 natural)
Attacks	Bite +19 melee, 2 claws +14 melee
Damage	Bite 3d10+4, claws 3d8+4
Face/Reach	10 ft. by 20 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks	Cause panic, stunning attack, roar
Special Qualities	Damage reduction 20/+2, resist fire 20, immune to enchant ments, polymorph self, vulnerable to sunlight
Saves	Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +10
Abilities	Str 28, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 14
Skills	Climb +22, Disguise +10*, Intimidate +10, Jump +22, Listen +10, Spot +10
Feats	Power Attack, Cleave

* when using polymorph ability

Climate/Terrain Temperate forests
Organization Solitary
Challenge Rating 12
Treasure Double standard
Alignment Always neutral evil
Advancement Range 17-32 HD (Gargantuan); 32+ HD (Colossal)

Kurge

A kurge is a disgusting undead creature that appears as an animated humanoid in an advanced state of decay. Various body parts and limbs are often hanging together only by a few rancid strips of flesh. The unholy symbol of Tharizdun is burned into its forehead, torso, and both arms and legs. Faint white flame that radiates intense cold washes over the thing's body, but perhaps the strangest aspect of a kurge is the fact that it floats about a foot off the ground when moving.

Kurge were created by the Cult of Tharizdun as temple guardians. While their creator lives (either alive or undead) the kurge are bound to strictly and literally follow orders. Once their creator dies, however, the kurge become uncontrolled. Such kurge actively search for living mortals to destroy out of hatred for life.

Although all but forgotten, the process by which a kurge is created is relatively simple and can be undertaken by any wizard with access to the school of Necromancy—once the appropriate spells are known and available to be cast. The wizard must first slay a living person (human or nonhuman) by injecting the victim with a rare and lethal poison known as haramere. Haramere is difficult to find and brew, and often costs in excess of 1,500 gp per dose. It is an injected DC 18 poison that does 2d6 initial Constitution damage and 2d6 secondary Constitution damage. Those slain by haramere begin to putrefy very rapidly, and within 6 hours are nothing but a skeleton in a pool of liquefied filth. This decay can be stalled by soaking the body in brine; this must be done for an entire night if a wizard wishes to create a kurge from the remains. Once these requirements are met, the wizard must cast the following spells on the body while it is still submerged in brine: *animate dead, levitate, geas, telekinesis, vampiric touch,* and *gentle repose.* With the last spell, the body rises from the brine as a kurge, ready to obey its creator's every whim.

Combat

Kurge generally lie motionless on the ground, waiting for victims to come near. When someone does, they spring up and attack, surprising the victim. A successful Spot check versus a kurge's Hide check defeats such an ambush. Kurge attack with two claws until they are struck for damage. (See below.)

Constitution Damage (Su): Kurge seethe with an unholy cold fire that damages the lifeforce of those they touch. Anyone struck by a kurge must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or take 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage.

Disease (Ex): Kurge are filthy creatures that swarm with parasites and filth. Anyone who is damaged by a kurge in melee combat must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or catch a particularly virulent disease known as skinripple from the creature. If the Fortitude save is not successful, the damaged character takes 1d4 points of permanent Constitution damage after an incubation time of is 1d4 days. Once per day afterward, the infected character must make a successful Fortitude saving throw to avoid repeated damage. Two successful saves in a row indicate that the character has fought off the infection.

Initial symptoms include numbness, chills, dizziness, and shortness of breath. As the disease progresses, large watery blisters form on the victim's body and the skin becomes loose and baggy.

Anatomic Separation (Su): Whenever a kurge is struck for damage, the monster's body splits apart into six components: a head, two arms, two legs, and the torso. Each body part remains animated and can continue to attack by slamming into targets with great force. These attacks cause temporary Constitution damage as detailed in the kurge sidebar. A kurge's face and reach remain the same once it anatomically separates; the body parts must remain fairly close together. Each body part can attack different targets in melee range, or they can all concentrate on a single target. The body parts continue to fight until the kurge's hit points are

KURGE

Medium Undead

Hit Dice	6d12 (39 hp)
Initiative	+4 (Dex)
Speed	30 ft.
AC	17 (+4 Dex, +3 natural)
Attacks	2 claws +7 melee or 6 slams +5 melee
Damage	Claw 1d6+3; slam 1d4
Face/Reach	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks	Constitution damage, disease, anatomic separation
Special Qualities	Particle cloud, *feather fall,* fast healing 1, undead immunities
Saves	Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +6
Abilities	Str 16, Dex 18, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14
Skills	Climb +9, Escape Artist +4*, Hide +10, Move Silently +10, Search +6
Feats	Multiattack, Combat Reflexes

* When anatomically separated the kurge receives a +10 bonus to Escape Artist checks.

Climate/Terrain Any
Organization Solitary or gang (2-5)
Challenge Rating 6
Treasure Half standard goods or items
Alignment Always chaotic evil
Advancement Range 7-12 HD (Medium-size)

reduced to 0, at which time the body parts drop to the ground and rapidly rot away. Magical forces prevent the body parts from being disassociated and taken from the square the kurge occupies. Grapple attempts against separated kurge parts are treated as though made against a huge creature.

Particle Cloud (Su): When a kurge's anatomic separation power activates, hundreds of tiny bits of bone and leathery flesh explode off of the kurge's body, surrounding each body part with a stinging swarm of whirling decay. Anyone in melee combat with a separated kurge automatically takes 1d3 points of damage per round from this cloud.

Feather Fall (Sp): Although their means of locomotion might resemble flight, it is actually a form of levitation that allows horizontal motion. A kurge always remains no more than a foot off the ground. A falling kurge is protected by a continual *feather fall* effect.

Fast Healing (Ex): A kurge heals damage very quickly at the rate of 1 hit point per round. If this returns the kurge to full hit points, its body parts instantly reattach. This healing ceases once the kurge is brought to 0 hit points.

Undead: The kurge is immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, *sleep,* paralysis, stunning, and disease. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Skills: A kurge gains a +10 bonus to Escape Artist checks when its anatomic separation power is active.

Rogue Eidolon

Typically 12 to 14 feet tall, the exact appearance of one rogue eidolon differs wildly from the next. They are always constructed of purple stone (often magically treated to achieve such a distinct color). As a general rule, they are humanoid in shape, badly weathered, and possess monstrous deformities. The only other constants from one rogue eidolon to the next is the fact that their hands are always pitch black, and their faces are completely blank save for a crude symbol of Tharizdun carved violently into the otherwise featureless visage. This symbol leaks a thick fluid that looks like blood and evaporates within minutes of dripping to the ground.

Many centuries ago, when the Dark God was still free, the most powerful cult cells created large statues in the images of their leaders. The faces of these statues were left blank save for the symbol of Tharizdun to indicate the Dark God's mastery over his followers. These statues were always placed at honored locations in the Dark God's temples were they stood over countless sacrifices. Those cult cells who particularly pleased the Dark God were sometimes rewarded; Tharizdun himself would send the tiniest shred of his power across the dimensions to infuse the cult's statue, granting it sentience and the ability to serve as a sort of avatar for the Dark God. These "awakened" eidolons were fully aware, wielded a devastating array of divine spells, and usually took the roles of advisors to the cell. In certain cases where the members of a cult displeased Tharizdun, the eidolon would eradicate the cult cell before deactivating itself.

With the Dark God's imprisonment, the many eidolons operating throughout the world were instantly cut off from the source of their power. While they retained their intelligence and mobility, this sudden loss of divine power drove them completely insane. Most of these eidolons slew their cults before destroying themselves in a fit of suicidal rage, but a few wandered off into the wilderness. Since Tharizdun's imprisonment, no new constructs of this type have been created, and the rogue eidolons that still function have degenerated into complete psychosis and are little more than destructive forces of evil.

ROGUE EIDOLON

Large Construct

Hit Dice	9d10 (49 hp)
Initiative	+0
Speed	30 ft. (can't run)
AC	21 (-1 size, +12 natural)
Attacks	2 slams +10 melee
Damage	Slam 2d6+7
Face/Reach	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks	Confusion, blood spray
Special Qualities	Damage reduction 20/+2, SR 19, construct
Saves	Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1
Abilities	Str 20, Dex 10, Con —, Int 4, Wis 6, Cha 12

Climate/Terrain Any
Organization Solitary
Challenge Rating 9
Treasure None
Alignment Always chaotic neutral
Advancement Range 11-18 HD (Large), 19-27 HD (Huge)

Combat

A rogue eidolon almost always attacks any living creature it encounters due to a burning need for revenge for the loss of its god. The nature of the insanity that afflicts a rogue eidolon is completely unpredictable, though, and it's possible that it simply ignores intruders. When a rogue eidolon attacks, it does so by smashing victims with its stony fists. Tactics mean little to a rogue eidolon. Its attacks are so single-minded that it often ignore easier targets once it has selected a victim.

Confusion (Sp): A being struck by a rogue eidolon must make a Will save (DC 15) or be *confused*. Insane characters suffer from a continuous *confusion* effect; this effect can be removed only by *greater restoration, limited wish, miracle,* and *wish*.

Blood Spray (Su): On the first round of combat and every fourth round thereafter, the rogue eidolon can spew a gout of thick blood from the seeping symbol carved into its face at a target within 30 feet. This is a free action. A creature struck by the blood spray must make a Will save (DC 15) or be afflicted with a terrible madness that forces the victim to see all friends as hated enemies. A creature that succumbs to this rage will attack its closest ally immediately; this rage prevents spell casting but not the activation of magic items that require spell completion. This murderous frenzy lasts for 3d6 rounds.

Construct: Rogue eidolon are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

Rotripper

A rotripper (pronounced rot-ripper) appears as a decaying 10-foot-tall ogre corpse with more than two arms; some rotrippers possess more than twelve arms in all, each of different sizes and shapes. A rotripper created from a humanoid or giant other than an ogre is exceedingly rare.

The rotripper understands that lairing in heavily populated areas is dangerous and thus prefers to lurk in out-of-the-way locales such as mountain passes or roads through dense forests. Every rotripper is incredibly patient and persistent, and only death stops it from tracking a victim once it decides it wants the victim's arms. This obsession with collecting arms was likely instilled long ago when the Cult of Tharizdun created the first rotrippers as a sort of "bloodhound" to track down victims who had escaped the cult's clutches.

Animals avoid rotripper lairs; birds and insects won't even fly over them.

A rotripper is impossible to control without powerful magic. The necromancers or priests who create these undead beings generally do not want them to serve as guardians or servants as a result. Generally, a rotripper is created only to sow destruction and pain in the world.

Creating a rotripper requires an armless ogre corpse. This corpse must have a pair of living ogre limbs grafted to its body by magical means. Next, the body must be anointed with the blood of a vampire and the spittle of any demon. The creator must then animate the body by means of either a *limited wish* spell or a specialized version of the *raise dead* spell. The newly created rotripper might attack its creator in an attempt to steal her arms, so a means of restraining or controlling it is recommended.

ROTRIPPER

Large Undead

Hit Dice	8d12 (52 hp)
Initiative	-1 (Dex)
Speed	30 ft.
AC	15 (-1 Dex, -1 size, +7 natural)
Attacks	2 claws +8 melee, additional claws +6 melee
Damage	primary claws 1d8+5, secondary claws 1d8+2
Face/Reach	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks	Grab, remove limb, rend
Special Qualities	Undead, damage reduction 10/+1, absorb limbs
Saves	Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +10
Abilities	Str 20, Dex 8, Con —, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 13
Skills	Climb +13, Hide +3, Intuit Direction +10, Search +9, Wilderness Lore +10
Feats	Track, Multiattack

Climate/Terrain Any
Organization Solitary or gang (3-8)
Challenge Rating 7
Treasure Standard
Alignment Always chaotic evil
Advancement Range 9-16 HD (Large), 17-24 HD (Huge)

Combat

The rotripper is fairly intelligent, but its insatiable greed for new arms often forces it to throw tactics to the wind and simply wade into combat, arms flailing. The two original arms grafted onto its body during its creation are the rotripper's primary attack; any additional arms comprise the monster's secondary attacks. A Large rotripper can possess up to 2d8 arms, while a Huge one can possess up to 4d8 stolen limbs. Fortunately, a single target can be attacked by no more than four arms at once. The rotripper can split its attacks among any targets in melee.

Improved Grab (Ex): The rotripper is supernaturally strong and gains the appropriate bonuses to attack rolls and damage with its attacks, despite the musculature of the arm employed. Each time a rotripper makes a successful attack, it can make a free grapple check without provoking an attack of opportunity. It gains a +1 bonus to this grappling check for each arm that is already grappling the victim.

Rend (Ex): If a rotripper hits with at least two claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d8+7 points of damage. A rotripper that hits a single target with four arms can rend a victim twice.

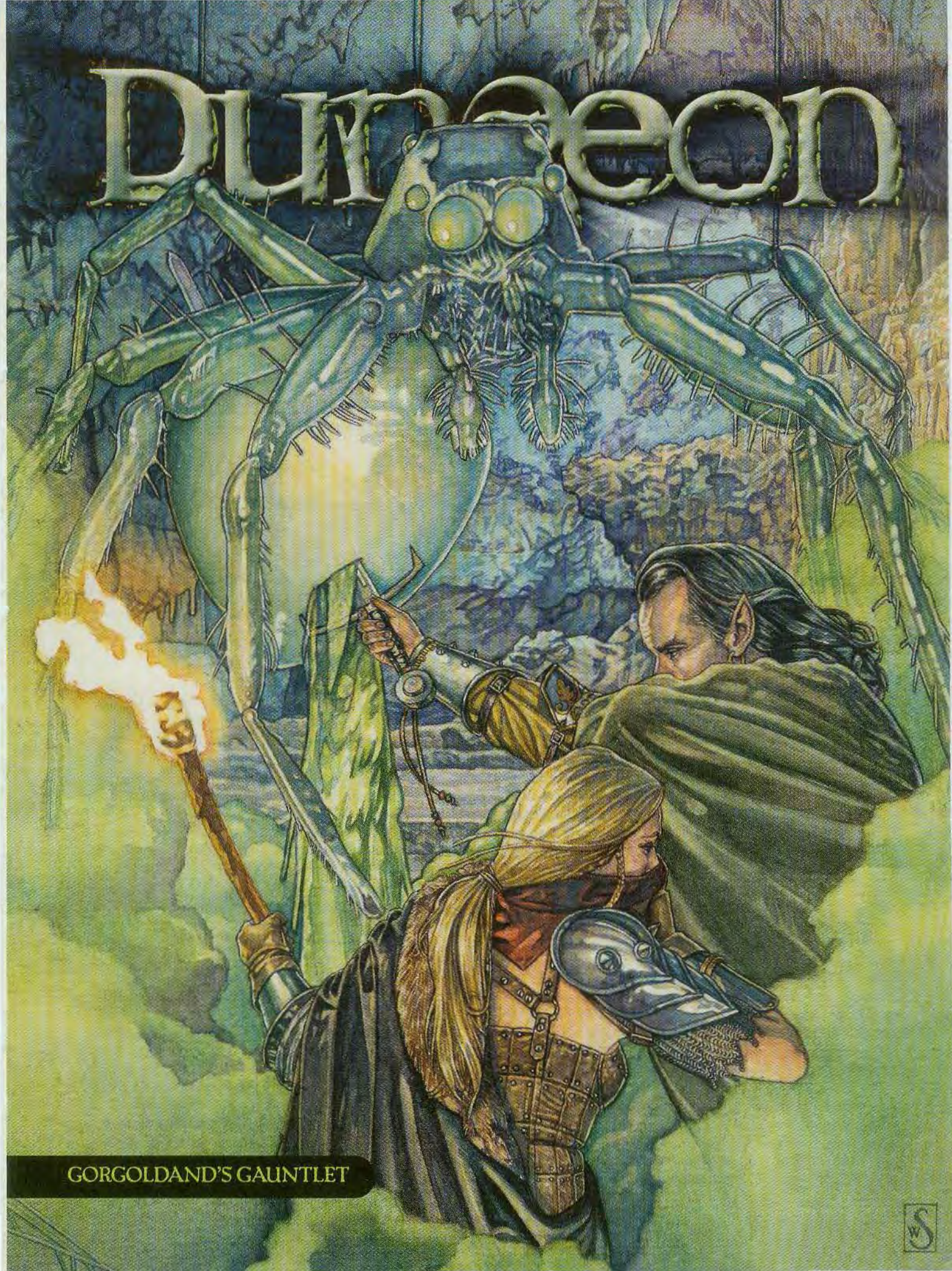
Unlike the rend attacks of other creatures, if a victim is slain (reduced to -10 hit points) by a rend attack, the rotripper has ripped the victim's arms off. The following round, the rotripper uses its absorb limb ability to fuse the victim's arms with its body.

Absorb Limb (Su): Once a rotripper removes a limb, it attaches it to its own torso. It takes a move-equivalent action to absorb one arm; it takes a full-round action for the rotripper to attach two arms. Once the arm is attached, the rotripper heals 1d12 hit points and a set of talons rapidly grow from the arm's hand. The rotripper can attack with a new arm the round after it is attached, though it can still only target a single opponent with a maximum of four arms.

Undead: Rotrippers are immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, and disease. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

HEY IGOR, WHAT'S NEW?
OUR FORTUNE!
REALLY.
CONDOS AVAILABLE
DORK TOWER
BY PHIL FOGLIO
YEAH! NOW THAT THEY'VE "OPEN SOURCED" D&D, ANYBODY CAN WRITE A MODULE FOR IT!
SO YOU DID.
AND HOW!
PEGASAURUS GAMES
AND THE "OUR" PART OF THIS FORTUNE?
SIMPLE! I SELL THEM TO YOU FOR FIVE DOLLARS, AND YOU SELL THEM HERE FOR TEN!
sigh. LET'S SEE IT.
HALF NAKED ELF BABES IN THE CITY OF DEATH! CATCHY TITLE.
I THOUGHT THE FIRST ONE SHOULD BE MORE INTELLECTUAL.
OKAY - I'LL TAKE IT.
REALLY?! HUZZAH!
HEY! I SAID YOU SHOULD SELL IT FOR TEN DOLLARS!
BUT IT'S WORTH FIFTY.
WHY?
HALF NAKED ELF BABES IN THE CITY
$50
IGOR, IF YOU BECOME FAMOUS, IT'LL BE CHEAP AT FIFTY BUCKS. A HAND-WRITTEN MANUSCRIPT ONE-OF-A-KIND PRE-RELEASE AND YOUR FIRST COMMERCIAL SALE ALL IN ONE! ANY REAL COLLECTOR WILL KNOW WHAT THIS IS WORTH!
AND IT'S GOT HALF-NAKED ELF BABES!
ELF 1
uh... but... I...
IT MUST BE MINE!
OKAY.
JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE HAS OPEN SOURCED THEIR BRAIN, DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO PLAY WITH IT.
SEE YOU. WANT SOME MUSKRAT STEW?
www.studiofoglio.com

Dungeon



GORGOLDAND'S GAUNTLET

Gorgoldand's Gauntlet

Adventurers Welcome!

by Johnathan M. Richards

cover by Stephen Walsh • illustrated by Dennis Cramer • cartography by Diesel

"Gorgoldand's Gauntlet" is a D&D adventure suitable for four 1st-level PCs. It takes place in a cave network in the side of a cliff overlooking a lake and can easily be inserted into any campaign. The adventure can be adapted for characters of up to 4th level, as described in the "Scaling the Adventure" sidebar.

Monster Statistics Trap Statistics Object Statistics Non-player Characters (NPCs)

Adventure Background

A gold dragon calling himself "Gorgoldand" (an anagram of "gold dragon") converted a cave network into a testing ground to surreptitiously test the abilities of local adventuring bands. He did this by posing (in human form) as a book collector and hiring each band to unearth a small cache of important tomes said to be stored in the deep recesses of a cave network known as the "Gauntlet." As the adventurers struggled through the various traps and obstacles Gorgoldand had put in their way, the dragon observed their progress with the help of his pseudodragon companion, Snooky. If the adventurers were ultimately successful, Gorgoldand retrieved the tomes and allowed the heroes to keep the other treasure he'd stocked in the Gauntlet from his hoard. Always included in the treasure was a magic sword of his own design, through which he could keep tabs on the band. Details on this magic sword are provided in the "Hoardmaster" sidebar. Once the adventurers were gone, Gorgoldand would restock the treasure room in preparation for the next adventuring band.

Recently, however, Gorgoldand vanished. Lacking further guidance in the months since his master's disappearance, Snooky has done his best to keep the testing facility running: feeding the rust monsters and distributing copies of the maps that lead adventurers to the Gauntlet. When a band of jermlaine moved into the cave network a few months ago, Snooky grudgingly approved of the modifications they made to the Gauntlet, his love of practical jokes winning out over his sense of fair play. All in all, Snooky sees the jermlaine as a self-sustaining "upgrade" to his absent master's Gauntlet.

Adventure Synopsis

"Gorgoldand's Gauntlet" is a site-based adventure with a predominance of puzzles and traps. The PCs discover a map leading to the Gauntlet and explore it looking for treasure. They test their strength and wits against various traps and puzzles created by the gold dragon, as well as some slightly more devious and dangerous ones added by the scheming jermlaine. If they make it all the way to the end of the Gauntlet, they'll have gained access to a magic item that can have a significant impact on their adventuring careers.

For the Players

The PCs are brought into the adventure by following a map that leads to the Gauntlet. They could have found the map in a treasure hoard during a previous adventure, or Snooky might have simply left a copy at the PCs' campsite as they slept. In either case, the map directs the PCs to the entrance of the Gauntlet but provides no information on the interior of the cave network (and thus it is not provided as a player handout). The map specifically mentions hidden treasure at the end of the Gauntlet but does not indicate what that treasure is.

The Gauntlet

Unless otherwise mentioned, the interior of the Gauntlet is dominated by rough floors and is unlit. PCs without darkvision need to provide their own light sources.

1. Cliff Ledge.

The PCs' map leads them to the top of a cliff overlooking a large lake.

A metal piton hammered into the stone near the edge of the cliff gives silent testimony that others have been this way before, although the rope that would normally be attached to the piton is missing. The narrow cave entrance to the Gauntlet is some 60 feet below the top of the cliff.

The jermlaine band removed the rope that the last adventuring band used to climb down to the cave entrance. The PCs can attach their own rope to climb down or do so without rope. Climb checks (DC 20 without rope or DC 10 with rope)

are required from each character. Anyone falling from the cliff face plummets to the lake surface below. The cave entrance is 20 feet above the surface of the water. (The lake is 40 feet deep in that area.) PCs plunging from the top of the cliff fall a total of 80 feet before hitting water. Use the "Falling into Water" rules on page 112-113 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* to calculate falling damage, as appropriate.

2. Cave Opening.

The cave opening is a narrow, upright slit in the side of the cliff wall. There is no illumination within.

PCs must walk single file until reaching area 3. The DM should determine the party's marching order to see who gets to experience the trap just ahead.

3. Spider Trap.

The jermlaine have added some refinements to the Gauntlet in the few short months since moving in. Along the 20-foot-high cavern ceiling they've anchored a "spider web" of crisscrossing rope lines. Two jermlaine stand on watch here, ready to drop the husk of a large spider onto the first PC who enters the cavern.

Read or paraphrase the following to the player of the lead character:

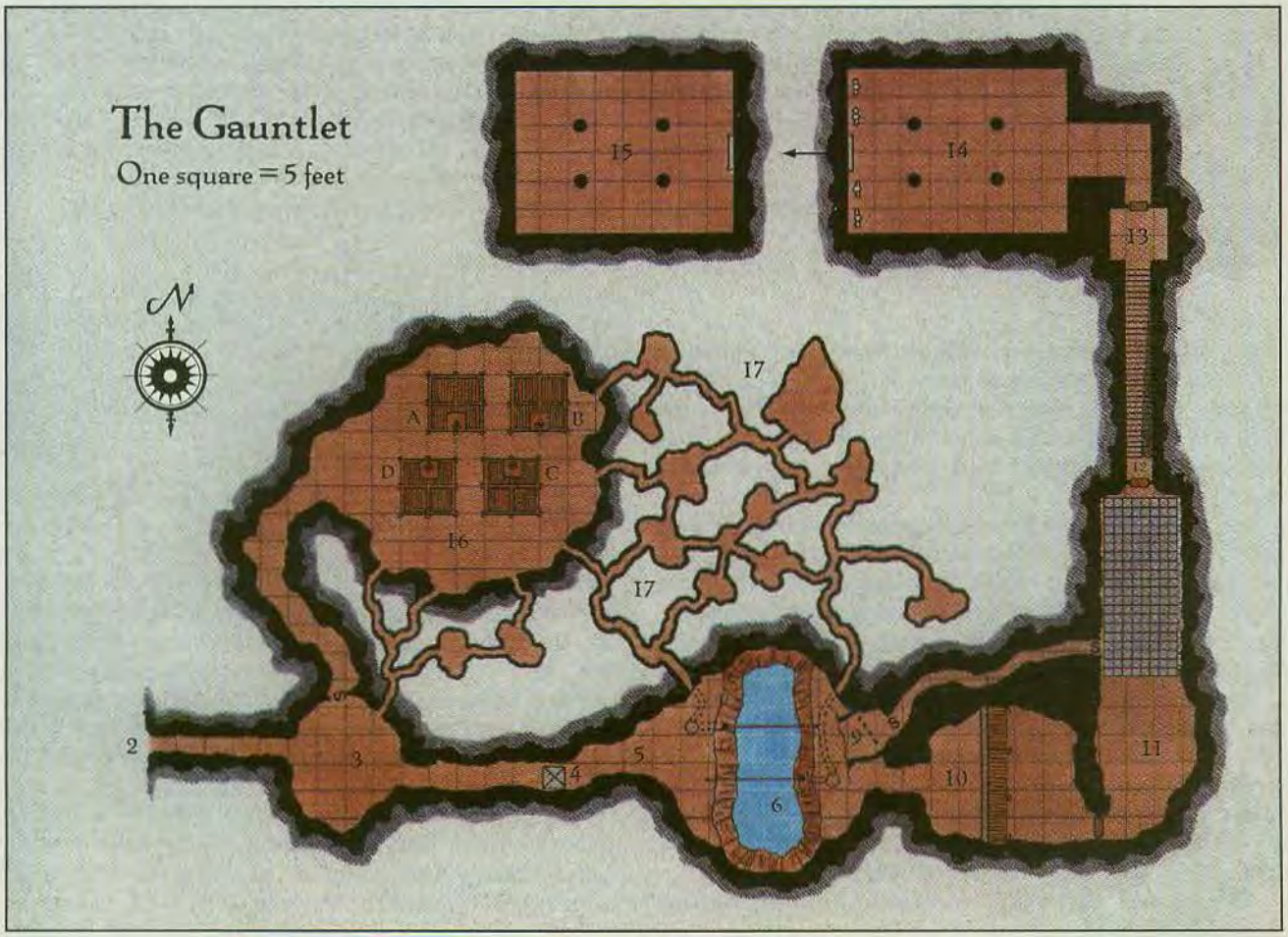
> The narrow passageway widens into a cavern. A hairy, multilegged form drops down on you from the shadows above!

Along the north wall of the cavern is a secret door. The secret door opens to a passageway that leads to a set of four holding pits in area 16 and the jermlaine central lair in area 17. If the *dust of sneezing and choking* trap is triggered (see below), elves do not get their normal chance of detecting this secret door merely by passing within 5 feet of it. This restriction remains in effect until the magical dust cloud settles to the ground 5d4 rounds after being triggered. If the **Trap** is not triggered, or once the dust has settled, elves have their normal chances of noticing the secret door.

Trap (EL 2): You might want to allow PCs in the front half of the group a Spot check (DC 20) to see the ropes attached to the spider. If the characters fail this check, the PCs automatically strike first, as the spider is just a hollow husk shed by its previous owner and thus does not actually attack. However, the jermlaine have filled the husk with a packet of *dust of sneezing and choking* taken from a slain adventurer. Anyone inflicting damage on the dessicated spider husk with a piercing or slashing weapon rips it open and flings the magical dust in a 10-foot radius that fills the room.

Dust of Sneezing and Choking **Trap:** CR 2; Fortitude save negates (DC 15; initial 2d6 temporary Constitution, secondary 1d6 temporary Constitution); Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 15).

Creature (EL ½): After loosing the spider husk on the PCs, the two jermlaine hide in the crevices of the cavern ceiling. PCs trying to spot the jermlaine must make a successful Spot skill check opposed by the creatures' Hide skill checks. If the



Scaling the Adventure

Although this adventure is designed for 1st-level PCs, the module can be run for 2nd- to 4th-level PCs by changing the strength and number of opponents and traps. The "Encounter Level Table" at the end of the adventure lists the encounter levels for all the encounters. Use this as a baseline for modifying the adventure in the manner suggested below:

2nd-level PCs: The adventure, as written, is a bit too easy for 2nd-level PCs. Add one jermlaine to each of the three jermlaine encounters, and deepen the pit trap in area 4 to 20 feet. Give the merrow a single level of warrior, have the paralysis minefield deal 1d3 points of damage on a misstep, and add one more animated statue to area 14. If you use the optional encounter at the end of the adventure, give Breagar the dwarf another level of rogue.

3rd-level PCs: Run the adventure with the changes discussed above, plus the following additional modifications: Give the merrow a single level of fighter (instead of a level of warrior), have the paralysis minefield in area 11 deal 1d4 points of damage on a misstep, and add another animated skeleton statue to area 14 (four statues total). Also, make the statues stone, which gives them a Hardness of 8. Additionally, coat the fishhooks in area 6 with a mild venom (DC 14; initial and secondary damage 1d4 temporary Strength). Finally, add another 1st-level rogue (with statistics identical to Rashanda's) to the final encounter.

4th-level PCs: Run the adventure with the changes discussed above, but make the following additional modifications: Deepen the pit trap in area 4 to 30 feet deep, give the merrow two levels of fighter, have the paralysis minefield in area 11 deal 1d6 points of damage on a misstep, and add another stone statue to area 14 (five statues total). Coat the fishhooks in area 6 with poison (DC 18; initial and secondary damage of 1d6 temporary Strength). Finally, make Rotvil a 3rd-level barbarian if you use the final encounter.

PCs' Listen skill checks are higher than the jermlaine's Move Silently skill checks, they hear ratlike chitterings reminiscent of laughter. If discovered, these jermlaine skitter off into secret passageways carved into the cavern wall. The tunnels are much too small for the PCs to follow. These passageways are near ceiling level and wind back and forth before spilling out into area 16.

Jermlaine (2): CR 1/4; Diminutive Monstrous Humanoid (1 ft. tall); HD 1/4d8; hp 2 each; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40; AC 14 (+2 Dex, +2 size); Atk +0 melee (1d3-2, tiny club) or +2 ranged (1d4-2, small halfspear); SQ darkvision 60 ft., +15 racial bonus to Hide and Move Silently checks, +5 racial bonus to Listen checks; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 6, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 17, Cha 9.

Skills: Animal Empathy +2, Handle Animal +2, Hide +22, Listen +10, Move Silently +20, Open Lock +5, Spot +4. *Feats:* Skill Focus (Hide).

Possessions: Tiny club, small halfspear.

4. Trapped Room.

Once again, the passageway narrows, forcing travel in single file. Dangling from the cavern ceiling is a thin rope, ending in a loose lasso made from hair along the ground. The words "PUT FUT HEER" has been scrawled in chalk in the middle of the open lasso—obviously, this is someone's childish idea of a snare.

The area immediately beyond the rope lasso snare is a pit trap (see **Trap** below). The jermlaine added the simplistic and blatantly obvious snare trap to draw attention away from the real danger. The rope lasso is only weakly attached to the cavern ceiling and can be pulled down easily. (A PC cannot use it to prevent falling into the pit.)

Trap (EL 1): Gorgoldand created a simple pit trap here to test the adventurers. Two hinged trap doors open inward to a 10-foot pit if more than 50 pounds is placed on them. The jermlaine have since modified the pit, wedging the snapped-off blades of a few daggers into cracks in the stone pit floor. Furthermore, the devious little pests have lined the pit with a rare underground moss with effects similar to poison ivy.

Jumping over the pit trap, whether it's been activated or not, requires a successful Jump check. (The pit is 10 feet across.) A running jump is possible as long as the dust has cleared in area 3; otherwise, entering the dust cloud again forces another Fortitude check to avoid its hazards.

Pit Trap: CR 1/4; no attack roll necessary (1d6); +10 melee (1d4 spikes for 1d4 points of damage per successful hit); Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 20).

Moss Trap: CR 1/4; no attack roll necessary; 1d2 points of temporary Dexterity damage; Fortitude save (DC 16) negates.

Creatures (EL 1): To add insult to injury, when the PCs crawl back out of the pit (or while jumping over it) four jermlaine approach from the east. Each throws a spear at the PCs and then retreats, giggling all the way. PCs who make a successful Spot skill check (DC 15) see that each jermlaine also carries what appears to be a small shepherd's crook.

Jermlaine (4): hp 3 each; see area 3 for full statistics.

5. Chasm Entrance.

As you pursue the tiny tormentors, you see a chasm ahead. The little humanoids dive over the ledge feet-first, one at a time, with their crooks held out above them. Suddenly, you brush up against several slim strings and feel the tug of sharp metal on your face and arms!

The boxed text below assumes the PCs are in hot pursuit of the spear-throwing jermlaine. If this is not the case, modify the text accordingly.

Trap (EL 1): Across this area of the Gauntlet the jermlaine have hung hundreds of fishhooks on slim lines woven from hair. The fishhooks are staggered at various heights ranging from 2-6 feet from the cavern floor; the foot-tall jermlaine rush by at full speed, confident that they'll avoid entanglement. DMs might want to allow the PCs a Spot check (DC 20) to see the trap as they chase the jermlaine. (The DC is only 15 if the PCs proceed with caution.)

A successful Dexterity check (DC 20) is needed to get free of the fishhooks; each unsuccessful attempt deals another point of damage. Optionally, any PC not entangled can cut an entangled companion free with a slashing weapon. A

successful Search check discovers the trap. It can be disabled with a successful Disable Device check.

Fishhook Trap: CR 1; +8 melee (1d4+1) and *entangle* as the spell; Reflex save negates *entangle* effect (DC 20); Search (DC 14); Disable Device (DC 10).

6. Chasm.

A 20-foot wide chasm cuts across the dungeon corridor. The sound of splashing water emanates from the chasm bottom. On the stone floor across the expanse, a visored helmet sits upon the ground.

Closer examination of the chasm reveals some recent jermlaine modifications. A tiny piton hammered into the stone on the southwest side supports a thin thread woven from hair (most of it human); this thread acts as a zip-line for the jermlaine, who "ride" the line using their crooks down to a small hole in the ledge on the southeast side of the chasm. A similar setup exists for sliding down from the northeast surface to the northwest ledge. The threads do not support more than 25 pounds.

A 20-FOOT WIDE CHASM CUTS ACROSS THE DUNGEON CORRIDOR. ACROSS THE EXPANSE, A VISORED HELMET SITS UPON THE GROUND.

The jermlaine slide down the zip-lines to a hidey-hole in the southeast ledge; this connects to a set of jermlaine-sized stairs leading up to a small hole in the cavern floor covered by a visored helmet. From inside the helmet, a single jermlaine can use a tiny blowgun against the PCs under the benefit of 90% cover, providing a +10 bonus to AC. The blowgun darts deal 1 point of damage each; there are two dozen darts stored inside the helmet. Once the PCs make it across the chasm, they can simply lift the visored helmet up off the ground, exposing the narrow jermlaine tunnel and stairway below. At this point, the jermlaine retreat, using a tiny passageway that leads to their main lair in area 17. The PCs are unable to navigate the tiny jermlaine passageways.

A similar setup exists along the north side of the chasm. The jermlaine-sized stairs lead up to a hole in the floor at the northwest side of the chasm; this hole is covered by a small rock. At the bottom of the stairs is a side-shaft that leads back to the jermlaine den in area 17.

The chasm is 20 feet wide and angles down to the lake below. The chasm is only 15 feet wide at the level of the jermlaine ledges, some 10 feet below the dungeon floor and an equal distance above the surface of the water. PCs can elect to climb the north or south walls of the chasm; jump the chasm (a running jump is not possible unless the fishhooks in area 5 are cut down); or climb down the chasm, swim across, and climb back up the east side of the chasm. See the *Player's Handbook* for rules governing Climb and Swim skill checks. PCs falling into the water take no damage from the fall but might drown if they are wearing heavy armor; they might also find a nasty surprise waiting for them in the dark waters of the lake (see area 7).

7. Underwater Cave.

This large cavern is completely submerged and pitch black. The PCs need darkvision or some type of magical illumination to see the cavern's contents: a 16-foot wooden plank (originally positioned by Gorgoldand at the west end of the chasm, later pitched into the water by the jermlaine) and a few scattered bones (human and jermlaine). Hidden under a large rock is a canvas sack filled with 750 sp and 250 gp. A successful Strength check (DC 18) is required to move the rock.

Creature (EL 2): Since Gorgoldand first set up his Gauntlet, a merrow, outcast from his own tribe, has moved into the underwater cavern. Depending on the relative strength of the party, the merrow might be present during the adventure or out hunting fish in the lake. If present, he hears anyone splashing into his cavern from above and approaches to investigate. He attacks immediately upon discovering intruders. The jermlaine are aware of the merrow's lair and avoid the water at all costs.

Merrow (Aquatic Ogre): CR 2; Large Giant (9 ft. tall); HD 4d8+8; hp 26; Init -1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 16 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +5 natural, +3 hide); Atk +8 melee (1d8+7, longspear); AL CE; SV Fort +6; Ref +0; Will +1; Str 21, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7.

Skills: Climb +4, Listen +2, Spot +2. *Feats:* Weapon Focus (longspear).

SPELLED FRONT TO BACK IT'S A PERSON'S NAME
OR A PREVENTIVE GUARD, IT'S CERTAIN.
SPELLED BACK TO FRONT, IT'S WHAT YOU DO
WITH A BOW, A BLANK PAGE, OR A CURTAIN.

THE DOOR'S DIALS

DIAL 1	DIAL 2	DIAL 3	DIAL 4
B	A	I	D
D	E	L	E
S	L	N	N
W	O	R	T

THE RIDDLE

Spelled front to back it's a person's name or a preventive guard, it's certain.

Spelled back to front, it's what you do with a bow, a blank page, or a curtain.

8. Underwater Entrance.

This passageway is about 10 feet wide and leads from area 7 to the lake. The entryway is 10 feet below the surface of the water and cannot be seen from above the waterline. PCs investigating the cliff wall from below the waterline can find this passageway with a successful Spot check (DC 12).

9. Pseudodragon Lair.

Snooky the pseudodragon lairs atop a high ledge along the cavern overlooking the eastern side of the chasm. The lair is engulfed in shadows and can't be seen by the PCs unless they can levitate, fly, or otherwise gain access to the cavern ceiling.

A secret passage at the back of Snooky's lair leads to a shadowy overhang in area 11.

Creature (EL 1): Snooky stays out of sight, not wishing to reveal his presence. Once the PCs pass by area **6**, he surreptitiously follows them, keeping track of their progress without aiding them or revealing himself.

Snooky, Pseudodragon: CR 1; Tiny Dragon (3 ft. long); HD 2d12+2; hp 17; Init +0; Spd 15 ft., fly 60 ft. (good); AC 18 (+2 size, +6 natural); Atk +4 melee (1d3 and poison, sting), -1 melee (1, bite); SA poison; SQ see invisibility, telepathy, immunities, SR 19; AL NG; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 10.

Skills: Hide +8 (+16 in forests and overgrown areas), Intuit Direction +3, Listen +5, Search +2, Spot +5. *Feat:* Alertness.

SA–Poison (Ex): PCs struck by the pseudodragon's sting must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 12) or fall asleep for 1 minute. One minute later, another DC 12 Fortitude save is required; failure causes 1d3 days of sleep.

SQ–See Invisibility (Ex): Pseudodragons continuously *see invisible* as the spell, with a range of 60 feet.

SQ–Telepathy (Su): Pseudodragons can speak telepathically with beings that speak Common or Sylvan, provided they are within 60 feet.

SQ–Immunities (Ex): Pseudodragons are immune to *sleep* and paralysis.

Treasure: Snooky's treasure consists of two small wooden boxes of nails, three metal gauntlets, two tin spoons, a belt pouch filled with 38 gp (all of which Snooky doles out to the rust monsters in area 10), a single leather glove (a left-handed *glove of storing*), a jar of *Keoghtom's ointment,* and a dozen copies of the map the PCs used to find the Gauntlet.

10. Rust Monster Lair.

This chamber is blocked from side to side by a low wall of mortared bricks. The wall stands 8 feet tall, while the ceiling of the cavern is 15 feet high.

PCs should have little difficulty climbing over the wall; it's low enough that a boost up by a friend should get even the shortest PC to the top. Once the PCs have reached the top of the wall, read or paraphrase the following:

The door inscription is a riddle, which reads:

The wall is 1 foot thick. Behind and built into the wall is a 5-foot-high shelf that runs parallel to the floor. An odd wooden door is set into the far end of the cavern. Words have been carved into the door, but at this distance it's impossible to make out what they say.

SPELLED FRONT TO BACK, IT'S A PERSON'S NAME
OR A PROTECTIVE GUARD, FOR CERTAIN.
SPELLED BACK TO FRONT, IT'S WHAT YOU DO
WITH A BOW, BLANK PAGE, OR CURTAIN.

Below the door are four wooden dials, each with four different letters carved on its surface. The answer to the r

riddle is therefore a four-letter word, which must be spelled out with the four dials. The diagram above shows which letters appear on each dial. The answer to the riddle is "WARD."

Creatures (EL 5): Even if the players solve the riddle right-away, the PCs are attacked by the two rust monsters hiding under the brick shelf jutting out from the wall. The rust monsters attack before the PCs can turn the four dials into the correct configuration. The rust monsters are hungry, but they have been trained to wait until the PCs step on the floor of the cavern before attacking. If the PCs peek over the edge of the overhang and discover the rust monsters, the creatures attack immediately.

Rust Monsters (2): CR 3; Medium-size Aberration (5 ft. long); HD 5d8+5; hp 25, 21; Init +3 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 18 (+3 Dex, +5 natural); Atk +3 melee (rust, 2 antennae), -2 melee (1d3, bite); SA rust; SQ scent; AL N; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +9, Spot +9. *Feat:* Alertness.

SA–Rust (Ex): A rust monster that makes a successful touch attack with its antennae causes the target metal to corrode, falling to pieces and becoming useless immediately. The size of the object is immaterial—a full suit of armor rusts away as quickly as a sword. Magic armor and weapons, and other enchanted items made of metal, must succeed at a Reflex save (DC 20) or be dissolved. A metal weapon that deals damage to a rust monster also corrodes immediately. Wooden, stone, and other nonmetallic weapons are unaffected.

SQ–Scent (Ex): Rust monsters detect opponents within 30 feet by smell. If the opponent is upwind, the range increases to 60 feet; if downwind, it drops to 15 feet.

The rust monsters head for the largest concentration of metal (such as a well-armored PC). Being somewhat ungainly, they cannot climb onto the shelf sticking out of the wall, although their antennae can reach PCs perched there. PCs not wishing to lose most of their metallic armor and equipment can climb back onto the wall, out of the rust monsters' reach, while they puzzle out the solution to the riddle.

Once the four dials are in the correct configuration, the door swings outward into the next room, supported on hinges at the top instead of at the side. The fact that the entire door is made of wood prevents the rust monsters from corroding it and gaining access to other parts of the Gauntlet.

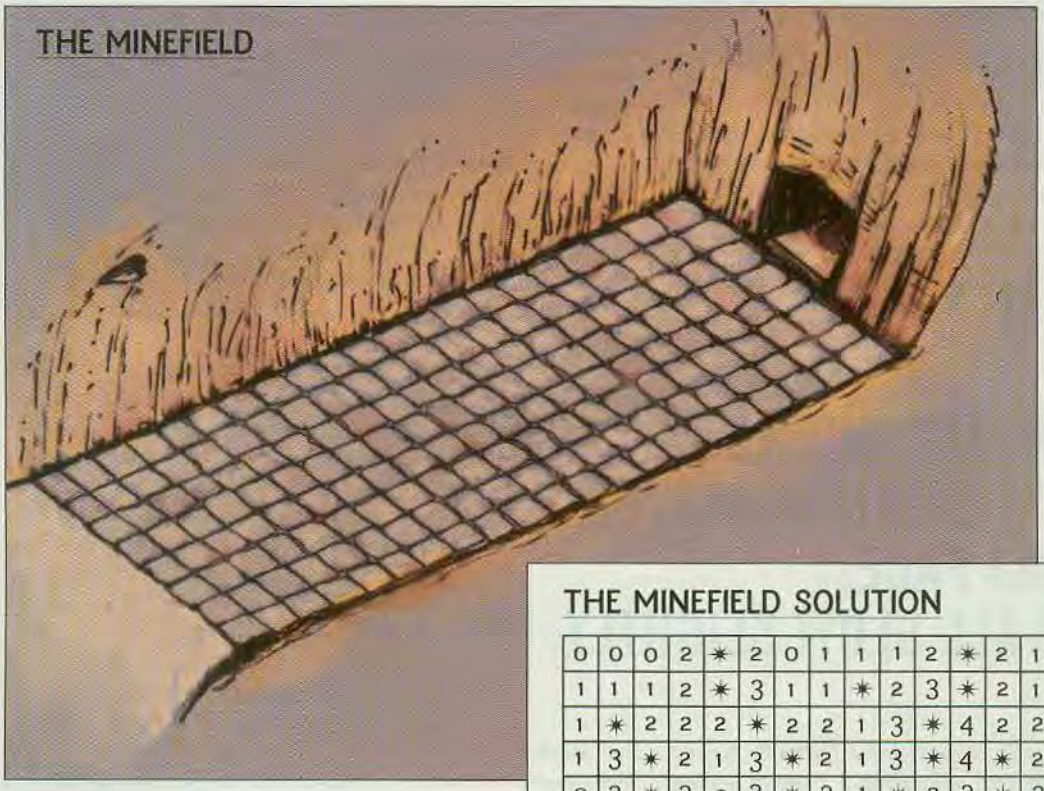
If the players cannot figure out the riddle, the door must be opened through other means. It can easily be opened from the other side, where the locking mechanisms are visible.

Locked Wooden Door: 1.5 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 15; Break (DC 18); Open Lock (DC 25).

11. Paralysis Minefield.

The floor of the cavern is smooth, although the walls remain jagged stone. Twenty feet ahead, the floor is divided into 160 squares, each a 2-foot by 2-foot metal plate, forming an 8 square by 20 square grid.

By the time the PCs arrive in this part of the Gauntlet, Snooky the pseudodragon has crawled through the secret passageway in the back of his lair to perch on a shadowy



THE MINEFIELD SOLUTION

0	0	0	2	✶	2	0	1	1	1	2	✶	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
1	1	1	2	✶	3	1	1	✶	2	3	✶	2	1	✶	1	0	1	2	2
1	✶	2	2	2	✶	2	2	1	3	✶	4	2	2	1	1	1	2	✶	✶
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0	3	✶	3	0	3	✶	3	1	✶	2	3	✶	3	2	✶	4	✶	4	✶
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1	2	3	✶	✶	2	1	2	✶	✶	2	1	1	2	✶	2	2	1	1	0
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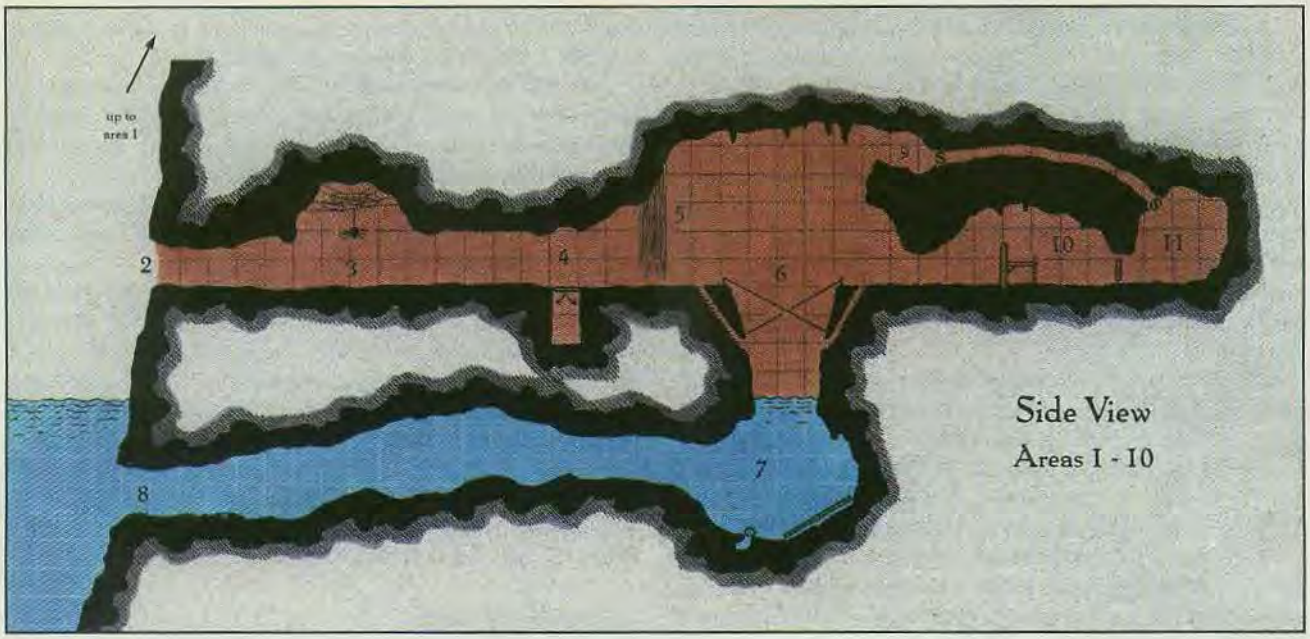

overhang looking into this room. Using his telepathic powers, he contacts the PCs:

Trap (EL 2): Each time a PC steps onto a square, Snooky

> Suddenly, a voice speaks in your head. "Many of the squares ahead are trapped," it says. "I will not tell you where the traps are located, but as you stand upon a square, I will tell you how many trapped squares are adjacent to that one. The rest is up to you."

(true to his word) informs her of how many trapped squares are adjacent to that one. **Diagram 1** shows the locations of the traps and the number of traps adjacent to each square, so you can pass the information, square by square, to the players.

Diagram 2 can be given to the players so they can track their characters' progress, filling in the information on the squares as the PCs move down the corridor.

Anyone stepping on a trapped square takes 1 point of electrical damage and must make a successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 20) or be paralyzed. Triggering a trapped square does not make that square "safe," as anyone else subsequently stepping onto that square also runs the risk of paralysis. A paralyzed PC that remains standing on a trapped square is not automatically paralyzed or damaged again when the initial paralyzation wears off; she can step freely from that square. If the PC steps back onto the trapped square at a later time, however, she must make another Fortitude save to avoid the damage and paralysis.

The easiest way for the PCs to get through the minefield is to write down how many traps each square is adjacent to. Any time the PCs stand on a square that is adjacent to no traps, they know that it is safe to stand on each of the (up to) eight squares touching that one. The way the traps have been positioned, it is possible for the PCs to make it through the gridwork without losing a member of the party to a trapped square.

Climbing along the natural stone walls requires a Climb check (DC 20). If a climbing PC falls, the DM must determine which square she lands on, as the PC might need to make a Fortitude save to avoid paralysis.

Once the PCs have made it past the trap they come to a standard wooden door. The door is unlocked, and opens outward into the next room.

EACH OF THE ASCENDING STAIRS HAS A WORD ENGRAVED ON ITS FRONT FACE; THE WORDS ALL GLOW SLIGHTLY.

Electrified, Paralyzing Floor: CR 2; 1 point of damage and paralysis for 3d10+30 minutes per square contacted; Fortitude save negates paralysis (DC 20).

Creatures (EL 1): If the PCs take longer than 5 minutes to cross the room, four jermlaine come to investigate. The four jermlaine descend the stairs on the other side of the door (they have discovered the secret of the stairs through trial and error, though they can't read the message written on them—see area 12 for details) and push it open enough for two of them at a time to hurl javelins at paralyzed PCs. (Treat the jermlaine as having three-quarters cover from the door.) The jermlaine hoot and taunt the PCs as they struggle through the room, but they leave if any of the PCs get close enough to jump into the doorway or if they run out of javelins, whichever happens first.

Jermlaine (4): hp 3 each; see area 3 for full statistics.

12. Stairway.

Beyond the door is a narrow corridor. Unlike the rest of the natural cave network seen so far, this passageway is carved into the rock; the floor, ceiling, and walls are smooth.

Each of the ascending steps has a single word engraved on its front face; the words all glow slightly, making them easy to read even in the gloom of the corridor. Beginning at the bottom step and reading up, the words say:

IT SEEMS EVERY SECOND OR THIRD TIME I STEP AWAY, FATE IS THERE, WITHOUT A DOUBT, TO TRAP MY COURSE.

The solution to this stairway is found by reading every third word; doing so reveals the message "EVERY THIRD STEP IS A TRAP." If the PCs avoid every third step, they can ascend to the upper level without incident.

Trap (EL 2): Anyone stepping on one of the third steps triggers a magic trap. Instantly, an illusionary sheet of flames whooshes up from the step, obscuring anyone or anything on that step from view. At the same time, the person or object on the step is *teleported* to a holding pit in area 16. The next round the flames automatically extinguish, leaving nothing behind. Gorgoldand's intention was to make it seem as if the person or object triggering the trap was instantly incinerated, taking him out of the picture without actually causing the individual any real harm.

Each trapped step can be activated more than once, but only a total of four victims (or objects) can be claimed by this trap. See area 16 for details.

Teleportation Trap: CR 2; *teleport* to area 16; Reflex save avoids (DC 27); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 32).

13. Gorgoldand's Den.

At the top of the stairs is a small room with a metal door set into the far wall. Hanging on the walls are various weapons mounted on wooden plaques.

The weapons might be unfamiliar to some PCs, as they're not weapons chosen by most adventurers. Mounted on a plaque of dark wood is a pair of siangham; the plaque is engraved: "PA'S HAND WEAPONS, GUTSTICKERS."

On the second wooden plaque is a metal gauntlet (right hand) with spikes protruding from the knuckles. The legend "PA'S GAUNTLET, FIST OF PAIN" is carved into the plaque.

On the wall across from the other two plaques is a longer one, upon which is hung a falchion. The inscription below it reads: "PA'S SWORD, ISLET'S LAUGHTER."

Anyone touching the doorknob of the metal door activates a *permanent magic mouth* that says: "Not without the password, you don't. What's the password?" This recurs any time the door is touched without first saying the password. The password, of course, is in plain sight of the PCs, written on the falchion's plaque inscription. By rearranging the spaces between the letters to form new words, "PA'S SWORD, ISLET'S LAUGHTER" becomes "PASSWORD IS LET SLAUGHTER."

The door is locked. The PCs need only speak the words "let slaughter" in Common before opening the door. Optionally, they can try picking the lock or bashing their way through the door, but this is a difficult process.

Iron Door: 2 in. thick; Hardness 10; hp 60; Break (DC 28); Open Lock (DC 24).

Treasure: Any of the weapons can be taken from the plaques and used by the PCs. The two siangham, spiked metal gauntlet, and falchion are all +1 weapons. The sound of ocean waves breaking upon a beach emanates from the falchion whenever its hilt is grasped.

If the weapons are examined using a *detect magic* spell, each one emanates Transmutation magic. While the PCs are free to use any of these weapons while inside the Gauntlet, once the weapons are brought outside the cave complex they automatically *teleport* back to the plaques in this room. If the plaques are removed or destroyed, the weapons reappear on the floor of the chamber.

THE PLAQUE IS ENGRAVED: "PA'S HAND WEAPONS, GUTSTICKERS."

14. Skeleton Trap.

Read or paraphrase the following text to the players when the PCs enter this room:

When the PCs enter the room, they can make a Spot skill check (DC 20) to notice a set of narrow grooves rising vertically from the floor along each side of the doorway leading into the room. As they approach the center of the room, they

> Beyond the door is a short passageway leading to an open archway 20 feet high. The 30-foot by 40-foot room beyond sports a 25-foot-high ceiling and is lit by golden-hued *continual flame* spells. Four columns stretch from floor to ceiling. The entire chamber has been carved from stone and painstakingly smoothed and polished, giving the room the appearance of a fancy hall in a lord's manor rather than part of a dungeon. Flanking a mirror mounted to the far wall are two skeletons, each grasping a shortsword. Letters are carved into the wall above the mirror, but at this distance you can't make them out.

can tell that the skeletons and their swords seem to be carved from white stone. (The statues are actually carved from wood and painted white, but their swords are made of stone.) Their skulls are smooth where the eye sockets should be. The letters carved above the mirror spell out the word "TIRIANISPORITIUS." Furthermore, anyone gazing into the mirror sees an exact reflection of the room, except that the room in the mirror shows a pile of loose coins, gems, and several weapons scattered upon the floor, with a set of six large tomes stacked in the corner.

The mirror is a magical transport device, activated by speaking the proper command word. The command word can be gleaned by noting the eyeless skeletal statues and applying that to the word carved above the mirror. Removing the "I's" from the word "Tirianisporitius" gives the true command word: "transportus."

If the command word is spoken within 15 feet of the mirror, the mirror's image darkens to an inky black and acts as a *dimension door* that leads straight to the treasure room in area 15. A similar mirror graces the interior of the treasure room, which works in the same manner. The treasure room is otherwise shielded against teleportation magic.

Touching the mirror or statues without first uttering the proper command word (see below) triggers the **Trap** and activates the **Creatures.**

Trap (EL 1): Touching the mirror or statues without first uttering the command word causes a portcullis to crash down in the doorway (along the grooves), blocking escape from the room. Anyone standing directly under the portcullis when it falls must make a successful Reflex saving throw (DC 15) or be struck for 2d6 points of damage and pinned. A PC pinned under the portcullis must make a Strength check or an Escape Artist check (DC 20) to extricate himself. A maximum of three (pinned or unpinned) PCs can help lift the portcullis high enough to allow others to crawl underneath it. (Use the "Aid Another" rule in the *Player's Handbook.*)

Portcullis Trap: CR 2; +10 melee (2d6 points of damage to PC underneath, blocks passage); Search (DC 16); Disable Device (DC 20).

Creatures (EL 3): As the portcullis falls, the skeletal statues animate and attack everyone in the room. The statues fight until they are destroyed, the intruders are slain, the intruders leave the room, or the correct command word is spoken aloud. (In all but the former case, they immediately cease battle and resume their original positions flanking the mirror.) The statues do not leave this room of their own accord under any conditions. Despite having no eyes or eye sockets, the skeletal statues act as if they have 60-foot darkvision. However, despite their skeletal appearance, the statues are not undead (they're carved from wood) and thus cannot be turned.

Animated Skeletal Statues (2): CR 2; Medium-size Construct; HD 2d10; hp 12 each; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15 (+5 natural); Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, stone shortsword); SQ construct, hardness; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 12, Dex 10, Con -, Int -, Wis 1, Cha 1.

SQ–Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, sub-dual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

SQ–Hardness: The wooden statues have a Hardness of 5.

15. Treasure Room.

The interior of this 30-foot by 40-foot room is lit with *continual flame* spells. The ceiling is 25 feet high and supported by four pillars, and the entire room has been carved from stone. Scattered about the floor are loose heaps of coins and gems, with the occasional weapon poking out of a pile. Six large tomes are stacked in the corner.

One round after the PCs enter the room, the scattered treasure starts to move, telekinetically dragging across the floor of the room counterclockwise, as if drawn by an invisible whirlpool. The objects move faster and faster around a central point in the middle of the room, forming an upward-thrusting pillar of treasure. Gradually, this pillar takes on a vaguely draconic shape with a head, a tail, four legs, and a pair of short wings.

THE TREASURE STARTS TO MOVE FASTER AND FASTER AROUND A CENTRAL POINT, AS IF DRAWN BY AN INVISIBLE WHIRLPOOL.

Creature (EL 4): The "coin dragon" immediately attacks everyone in the room, slapping opponents with its tail or wings. In addition, the coin dragon can shoot a barrage of coins and gems from its mouth like a breath weapon. After firing a coin barrage, the coin dragon must telekinetically reabsorb the coins and gems back into its body the following round, so it is restricted to a tail- or wing-slap attack the round after using its breath weapon.

Most ordinary weapons do little or no damage to the coin dragon. Piercing and slashing weapons slide right through the loose objects in its "body," doing no damage. A blunt weapon like a mace or club might dislodge a handful of coins, but these are easily returned to the coin dragon the following round. (They are sucked back into the creature's body telekinetically.)

A *dispel magic* cast upon the creature causes the disparate objects forming the dragon's body to crash to the floor, leaving the dragon "bodiless." The creature reforms its "body" the following round, but this allows PCs time to escape. The creature is not permanently destroyed until it loses all of its hit points.

The coin dragon never leaves its treasure room and naturally heals 3 hit points per day. PCs in combat with a coin dragon might find it necessary to do some damage, leave the treasure room to heal up and prepare new spells, then continue the assault later (possibly over the course of several days, depending upon the strength of the party).

Coin Dragon (1): CR 4; Medium-Size Construct (7 ft. long); HD 3d10; hp 18; Init +0; Spd 40 ft.; AC 14 (+4 natural); Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, tail slap or wing slap); SA breath weapon; SQ construct, damage reduction 10/+1, resistances; AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will -5; Str 14, Dex 10, Con –, Int –, Wis 10, Cha 1.

SA–Breath Weapon (Su): The coin dragon can breathe a 20-foot cone of coins and gems that deals 1d8+2 points of damage to anyone in the area of effect; a successful Reflex save (DC 14) halves the damage. The breath weapon is usable only once every other round.

SQ–Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, sub-dual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

SQ–Resistances (Ex): The coin dragon has acid, cold, electricity, and fire resistance 5.

Treasure: Once the coin dragon is slain, the PCs are free to recover the treasure that made up its body, as well as the six tomes that Gorgoldand often used as an excuse to send heroes into the Gauntlet in the first place. The tomes are all completely blank. (Gorgoldand, in his role as a human sage, would claim

that the writing was invisible, requiring a special set of magic spectacles to read.) The PCs are free to use the blank tomes as diaries, journals, for mapping, or as future spellbooks. Besides the tomes, the accumulated treasure breaks down to 2,000 cp; 550 sp; 300 gp; 16 gemstones worth 250 gp, 100 gp (×3), 50 gp (×7), and 10 gp (×5) respectively; two masterwork daggers; a light mace; a scimitar; and Hoardmaster, a longsword detailed in the sidebar.

16. Holding Pits.

These holding pits are accessed by a secret passage in area 3. Anyone or anything activating the trap in area 12 is *teleported without error* into one of the four pits (pits A, B, C, and D, in that order). Once each pit has a victim or object within, it no longer functions as a *teleport* destination until such time as the pit is no longer occupied. The pits are 10 feet on all sides, carved into the stone floor of the cavern, and topped with a 3-foot by 3-foot door of iron bars that opens out from the cage top.

Gorgoldand originally intended these pits as holding areas for adventurers who had fallen victim to his *teleport* trap in area 12. Gorgoldand would escort these victims back to the cavern entrance and cast a *lesser geas* spell on them, compelling the adventurers to refrain from telling anyone else about the secrets of the Gauntlet and Gorgoldand's involvement.

Unfortunately, the jermlaine soon discovered the secret door in area 3 and made their lair in a series of twisting passages connected to the holding pits. The pits were put to good use as jermlaine middens, and the vicious little creatures see no reason to stop the practice just because an occasional adventurer pops into existence inside their latrine pits!

The jermlaine slew the first adventurer that *teleported* into their latrine pit, shaved him bald, used his hair to weave their ropes and nets, and feasted on him for a week. Snooky was outraged at this betrayal; up until then, he thought the jermlaine were just playing elaborate, if somewhat dangerous, practical jokes on those adventurers willing to try their hand at the Gauntlet. Eventually, they agreed to a compromise: Snooky would use his tail venom to put any victims who *teleported* into the holding pits to sleep; the jermlaine would strip the victim of all possessions (except for some metal bits Snooky keeps), shave him bald, and bind the victim's ankles and wrists. Then Snooky and the jermlaine would drag the helpless and unconscious captive back to the cavern entrance at area 2 to be discovered by the rest of the adventuring band upon their return to the surface.

This agreement keeps everyone happy (with the possible exception of the victim). The jermlaine get to humiliate a member of "the giant races" and acquire more hair for their ropes, while Snooky gets to play a practical joke on an adventurer (who, in all fairness, would have been slain if the *teleport* trap was as lethal as Gorgoldand made it appear). The pseudodragon ensures that the jermlaine don't kill their victims and uses metal objects from victims to feed the rust monsters.

THE JERMLAINE SLEW THE FIRST ADVENTURER THAT TELEPORTED INTO THEIR LATRINE PIT, SHAVED HIM BALD ... AND FEASTED ON HIM FOR A WEEK.

17. Jermlaine Den.

The jermlaine have tiny passageways carved throughout this area, leading to their diminutive living alcoves and scattered treasure troves. Because of the size of their tunnels, only those as small as a jermlaine can traverse the passageways.

Creatures (EL varies): A combined total of 30 jermlaine live in the clan: 2 from area 3, 4 from area 4, 4 from area 11, and 23 others. Of these, twelve are noncombatant children. The other eleven have 3 hit points each; see area 3 for complete statistics.

Treasure: In the event the PCs somehow manage to force the jermlaine to hand over their treasure, it consists of 14 gp, 103 sp, seven gems valued at 10 gp each, two *potions of cure light wounds,* and a *scroll of levitate.* The jermlaine are illiterate and unaware of the scroll's value: After the chieftain's children fingerpainted crude images on the back of it in mud, he hung it in his den. The jermlaine band also has the equivalent of 150 feet of rope cut into various lengths, all woven from humanoid hair.

Hoardmaster

Gorgoldand stocks the treasure room of his Gauntlet with various treasures, but one thing he's sure to include each time is a Hoardmaster sword. Each Hoardmaster is a *+1 longsword* with a hilt carved to resemble a dragon's head. Two rubies take the place of the dragon's eyes. These ruby "eyes" are actually scrying devices, allowing Gorgoldand to see through them as if they were his own. This allows the gold dragon to keep tabs on the adventuring bands wise and powerful enough to make it to the end of his Gauntlet, for they might prove useful to him some day.

Hoardmaster gets its name from its ability to create a coin dragon if placed within a loose pile of coins and gems. This allows a treasure hoard to more or less guard itself; details on the coin dragon are provided in the description of area 15. Whoever places the sword with some treasure can later retrieve it without activating the coin dragon. Others are not so lucky. Of course, this means the PCs must choose between bringing Hoardmaster with them as a weapon or leaving it behind to guard their other treasures. Gorgoldand doesn't mind at when adventurers leave their Hoardmasters behind, as it allows him to scry their treasure for any interesting magical items. If he sees anything interesting, he's not against using a *teleport without error* spell to show up and study the item of interest. Gorgoldand created the Hoardmasters so that he would not trigger any coin dragon attacks himself. Of course, the gold dragon would never steal anything from the adventurers' hoard.

Hoardmaster can detect coins once/day, upon command. The sword points to the largest collection of coins within a 60-foot radius, regardless of intervening walls, hidden passages, or the like. The ability functions for 10 rounds each time it is used.

Caster Level: 12th; ***Prerequisites:*** Enchant Arms and Armor, *scry, telekinesis, unseen servant;* ***Market Price:*** 18,312 gp; *Weight:* 4 lbs.

Exiting the Gauntlet

The PCs should have no trouble exiting the Gauntlet, as they will have already encountered all of the traps on their way in, and the jermlaine won't be looking for them anymore. PCs who were "incinerated" by the stair trap at area 12 are found naked, bound, and probably fast asleep (under the effects of pseudodragon venom) in area 2 when the PCs return. All of their gear is gone: Metallic items have been taken to Snooky's lair in area 9; everything else has been claimed by the jermlaine.

Any of the magic weapons taken from area 13 (the two siangham, the spiked gauntlet, and the falchion) automatically *teleport* back to that room when taken outside the confines of the Gauntlet. Any weapons taken from the treasure room in area 15 remain with the PCs as they exit the Gauntlet.

As "Gorgoldand's Gauntlet" is primarily a puzzle-based adventure, players who prefer "more action, less thinking" might feel short-changed. If your players are of that bent, the following scenario can be inserted at the very end of the adventure when the PCs climb back up to the clifftop after exiting the Gauntlet. Remember that by the time the PCs have finished the Gauntlet, they should be 2nd level. (They won't gain a level until they have rested, however.) PCs weakened by their ordeal in the dungeon will find this encounter challenging. As the DM, you must take a careful measure of the party before throwing this encounter their way.

Creatures (EL 4): The PCs aren't the only ones with a copy of the map leading to the Gauntlet. Several other adventuring bands have already experienced the Gauntlet for themselves and moved on in either triumph or disappointment. One particular band, Rotvil's Rogues, entered the Gauntlet and were quickly rebuffed. Not willing to be driven away from possible treasure by a bunch of stinking jermlaine, but also not particularly eager to return to the Gauntlet's interior, the Rogues have been camping out in the area, licking their wounds and keeping an eye out for other adventuring bands. When the PCs approached and entered the cavern network, Rotvil and his gang saw their chance for some quick riches: All they had to do was hang around until the PCs returned from the Gauntlet and take their accumulated loot from them.

By the time the second PC climbs up to the top of the cliff, she finds a party of four humanoids racing on foot toward the cliff from 300 feet away, hollering like banshees. (The Rogues had intended on getting here earlier and setting up an ambush, but as usual, poor planning and a sleepy sentry got in the way of their ambitions.) Rotvil, the leader, is a half-orc barbarian; despite their name, only one gang member is a rogue. The others are a dwarven ranger and a human monk. All four have weapons drawn as they race toward the PCs. Rotvil wields a greatsword, the monk has a javelin, and the other two wield loaded crossbows. Their plan was simple: take the first PC hostage if possible, disarm him, and repeat the process with each PC as he reached the top of the cliff. Unfortunately for them, their tardiness means the PCs have a better chance of holding on to their well-earned treasure.

Tactics: Rotvil rages and races headlong into melee combat. Montego the monk hurls his javelin and then closes for hand-

Encounter Level Chart

Area	Encounter Description	EL	Area	Encounter Description	EL
3	Dust of Sneezing and Choking Trap	2	11	Paralysis Minefield	2
			11	4 Jermlaine	1
3	2 Jermlaine	1/2	12	Teleportation Trap	2
4	Pit Trap and Moss Trap	1	14	Portcullis Trap	1
4	4 Jermlaine	1	14	2 Animated Skeleton Statues	3
5	Fishhook Trap	1	15	Coin Dragon	4
7	Merrow	2	17	Jermlaine Tribe	varies
9	Snooky the Pseudodragon	1	Exit	Rotvil's Rogues	4
10	2 Rust Monsters	5			

to-hand combat as well. The other two hold their distance and use their crossbows, switching to melee weapons only when they run out of bolts or the PCs close in on them.

Rotvil, Male Half-orc Bbn2: CR 2; Medium-size Humanoid (6 ft. tall); HD 2d12+2; hp 20; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 40 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 armor); Atk +4 melee (2d6+2/crit 19-20, greatsword) or +4 melee (1d4+2/crit 19-20, dagger); SA rage 1/day; SQ half-orc, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC); AL NE; SV Fort +4; Ref +1; Will -1; Str 14, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +6, Jump +6, Listen +3, Wilderness Lore +2. *Feat:* Weapon Focus (greatsword).

Possessions: Studded leather armor, greatsword, dagger, waterskin, backpack.

Breagar, Male Dwarf Rgr1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (4 ft. 2 in. tall); HD 1d10+2; hp 12; Init +5 (+1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Spd 20 ft.; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 armor); Atk +2 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow) or +3 melee (1d4/crit 19-20, dagger); SA favored enemy (goblinoids); SQ dwarf, track; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 15, Int 9, Wis 9, Cha 8.

Skills: Listen +2, Move Silently +3, Intuit Direction +2, Wilderness Lore +2. *Feat:* Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Studded leather armor, dagger, light crossbow with 20 bolts, waterskin, backpack, *potion of cure light wounds.*

Montego, Male Human Mnk1: CR 1; Medium-Size Humanoid (5 ft. 9 in. tall); HD 1d8; hp 8; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (+2 Dex); Atk +0 melee (1d6, unarmed strike) or +2 ranged (1d6, javelin); SA stunning attack; SD evasion; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +3, Jump +4, Listen +3, Move Silently +5,, Swim +3. *Feats:* Dodge, Mobility.

Possessions: Javelin, waterskin, backpack, monk's outfit.

Rashanda, Female Human Rog1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid (5 ft., 6 in. tall); HD 1d6-1; hp 5; Init +1 (Dex); Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (+1 Dex, +2 armor); Atk -1 melee (1d6-1/crit 19-20, short sword) or +0 ranged (1d8/crit 19-20, light crossbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; AL CE; SV Fort -1, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 9, Dex 13, Con 9, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Bluff +5, Climb +3, Disable Device +5, Hide +5, Jump +3, Listen +4, Move Silently +5, Open Locks +5, Search +4. *Feats:* Lightning Reflexes, Run.

Possessions: Leather armor, shortsword, light crossbow with 20 bolts, waterskin, backpack.

Concluding the Adventure

So where's Gorgoldand? That's a question that's been deliberately left for you to answer, as best fits your campaign. It's possible that the gold dragon is off visiting the outer planes or engaged in a tricky bit of spell research; he might even have been captured by a powerful enemy. Rescuing the gold dragon might be a task for the PCs once they reach higher levels and learn of his existence.

At the DM's option, Gorgoldand can keep a watchful eye over the PCs' actions through the scrying ability of their newly-acquired Hoardmaster sword. If the dragon deems them worthy, he might approach them in the future to hire them for a specific task, or possibly even help the PCs get out of a hard spot. (Don't make this a common occurrence, lest the players come to expect their powerful gold dragon buddy to show up every time they get into a jam.) Of course, Gorgoldand need not present himself in dragon form, but merely as a human sage, wizard, or sorcerer. In any case, if the PCs gain Hoardmaster, you have a possible link to future adventures. Any of the following ideas could be developed into a further adventure:

- A Hoardmaster sword is stolen from another adventuring band who survived a previous excursion into the Gauntlet. These NPCs learn of the PCs' Hoardmaster, jump to the erroneous conclusion that the PCs stole the sword from them, and make appropriate plans for payback.

- It turns out that Gorgoldand put a few extra abilities in his Hoardmaster swords. After succumbing to a magic trap leaving him petrified but still conscious, the dragon sends his will out to the nearest Hoardmaster (the one owned by the PCs, naturally) and uses the sword to point the way to his location. The PCs must follow the sword to Gorgoldand's location, braving whatever dangers face them on the way.

SO, WHERE'S GORGOLDAND? IF THE DRAGON DEEMS THEM WORTHY, HE MIGHT APPROACH THEM IN THE FUTURE.

- A sorcerer holding Hoardmaster finds that, perhaps due to the legendary claim that dragon blood courses through a sorcerer's veins, she can actually scry through Gorgoldand's eyes! This might be a good way for the PCs to learn of the sword's link to the gold dragon that created it and could easily lead to adventures based on knowledge obtained through Gorgoldand's vision. D

Johnathan is the author of several DUNGEON Magazine *modules, including the popular "Challenge of Champions" series. He has also written several Ecology articles for* DRAGON Magazine, *including "The Ecology of the Jermlaine" and "The Ecology of the Pseudodragon."*

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All Over the Map

Making D&D Maps the Wizards of the Coast Way

by Michael G. Ryan

Every DM has done it: bought a pad of graph paper and mapped out a dungeon lair, a coastal village, or an entire nation for the players to explore. In short order, that map gets scuffed up by pencil marks showing the characters' travel route, Xs where pitfalls are hidden or where dungeons are located, and the wear-and-tear that inevitably comes from a group of people handling it constantly.

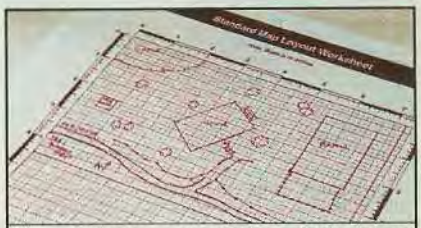
Now imagine making those maps for a living.

As the most anticipated roleplaying release in many years, the new D&D game required a consistent look across the board, from the charts that show how to attack to the sample maps of dungeons and villages. Given the incredible buzz about the product, those maps needed to be detailed, colorful, and striking. They needed to provide a new visual foundation for a game that's undergoing a major reconstruction.

Enter Rob Lazzaretti and Todd Gamble. Along with Dennis Kauth, a longtime veteran of mapmaking for D&D, these cartographers set out to create the new look. Rob has worked for Wizards of the Coast (and TSR) for more than six years, designing maps for such well-known lines as PLANESCAPE and DARK•MATTER (in addition to dozens of other projects both big and small). Todd Gamble did all of the mapwork for the *POKÉMON Jr. Adventure Game*, and his experience in building model railroads full-time prior to coming to Wizards of the Coast two years ago gave him an additional advantage when it came to mapmaking.

The new D&D maps aren't necessarily the traditional "how to get from here to there" maps; combat diagrams and myriad other charts that explain the rules in a visual format also fall under the purview of the cartographers. A casual flip through the brand-new *Player's Handbook* turns up various charts to illustrate the game. The process by which these maps come to be is simple yet challenging.

First, hand-drawn sketches come to the cartographers from the game designers, who provide an outline of how they'd like to see the final product turn out. Depending on the level of detail the designers are after, these sketches might be accompanied by descriptive text to give the cartographers a better sense of what the designer envisions. This text often includes a list of various details on the map and their dimensions. Some maps



The map is drawn to-scale on grid paper by the designer of the encounter.

The sketch is then carefully checked for inconsistencies or illogical arrangements before the cartographers start any mapping.

The first round is drawn by a cartographer onto vellum based on the designer's original concept.

After the drawing is approved, it is scanned and given final touches, such as color, keyed elements (below), backgrounds and border treatments.

Todd Gamble uses professional desktop publishing software, such as *Photoshop*, to finish his projects.

Digital production, especially for larger projects like this LIVING GREYHAWK poster, is helpful for making those "last minute" changes (circled in red on the proof) possible.

Tricks of the Trade

According to Rob Lazzaretti, senior cartographer at Wizards of the Coast, there's a simple way to develop your maps that saves you an amazing number of headaches in the long run: **Use overlay vellum sheets to protect your original maps.**

"It's not tracing paper," Rob cautions, "but vellum. It lasts longer. If you use this to add new locations to your maps, it'll keep you from ruining your originals by drawing all over them."

Also, **scan your originals**; you can take them to any professional copier if you don't have your own scanner and have them put onto a disk for you. Then you can manipulate the originals on your computer without doing any irreversible damage to them, or you can make printouts to mark up or give to your players.

Finally, **consider laminating your originals.** "We helped [President of Wizards of the Coast] Peter Adkison with his campaign maps," Rob says. "He had several binders full of laminated maps, and he could take them out and lay them together like tiles whenever he needed them. It was amazing, and it worked very well."

are not as thoroughly outlined, of course, and this gives the cartographers some options as they close in on the final product. (In the *D&D Adventure Game*, for example, a poster-sized map of a dungeon and the counters that accompany it offered the cartographers a great deal of creative freedom.)

Some products require a "rougher feel," so instead of being produced on a computer from the earliest steps, their creation begins as ink drawings by the cartographers. These drawings are then scanned into a computer for more intricate manipulation, but they retain that hand-drawn look that makes them seem more "real." All colors and terrain keys are then added by the mapmakers; in fact, the specific guidelines for those keys have been around for years, dating back to the early days of D&D. Additional keys for new terrain types are generated by the cartographers. BIRTHRIGHT, for example, required more detailed keys than GREYHAWK, so the mapmakers needed to create numerous new symbols to account for the additions. These new symbols were added to the catalog of existing keys for future use.

The level of detail—that is, how realistic it ultimately needs to look—in any given map dictates how difficult a map is to produce. In some cases, a mapmaker like Todd Gamble goes the extra mile to add those details that bring the map to life. "The original sketch for an inn might not call for a chimney," he says, "but you know there's got to be one there. And putting a woodpile out back adds a greater sense of realism to what you're seeing. I really enjoy working on 'big picture' maps, but the detail work is also fun and challenging."

The accuracy of such additions is a must, so both cartographers maintain a collection of photos and magazine clippings to use as reference materials. The Internet, of course, is yet another invaluable tool for verifying the logical placement of these extras.

In D&D game products, many of the maps are quite detailed, including Todd's most impressive work, a cross-section that shows the various levels of a dungeon. "Rob's always pushing me to excel," he says, "and with that motivation, I actually progress faster as a cartographer." Players might also recognize the sample dungeon from the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* as one they've seen before—that particular map was updated from one that appeared in the original *DMG*. Todd and Rob agree: This map was the most difficult and detailed to produce of all the D&D maps so far.

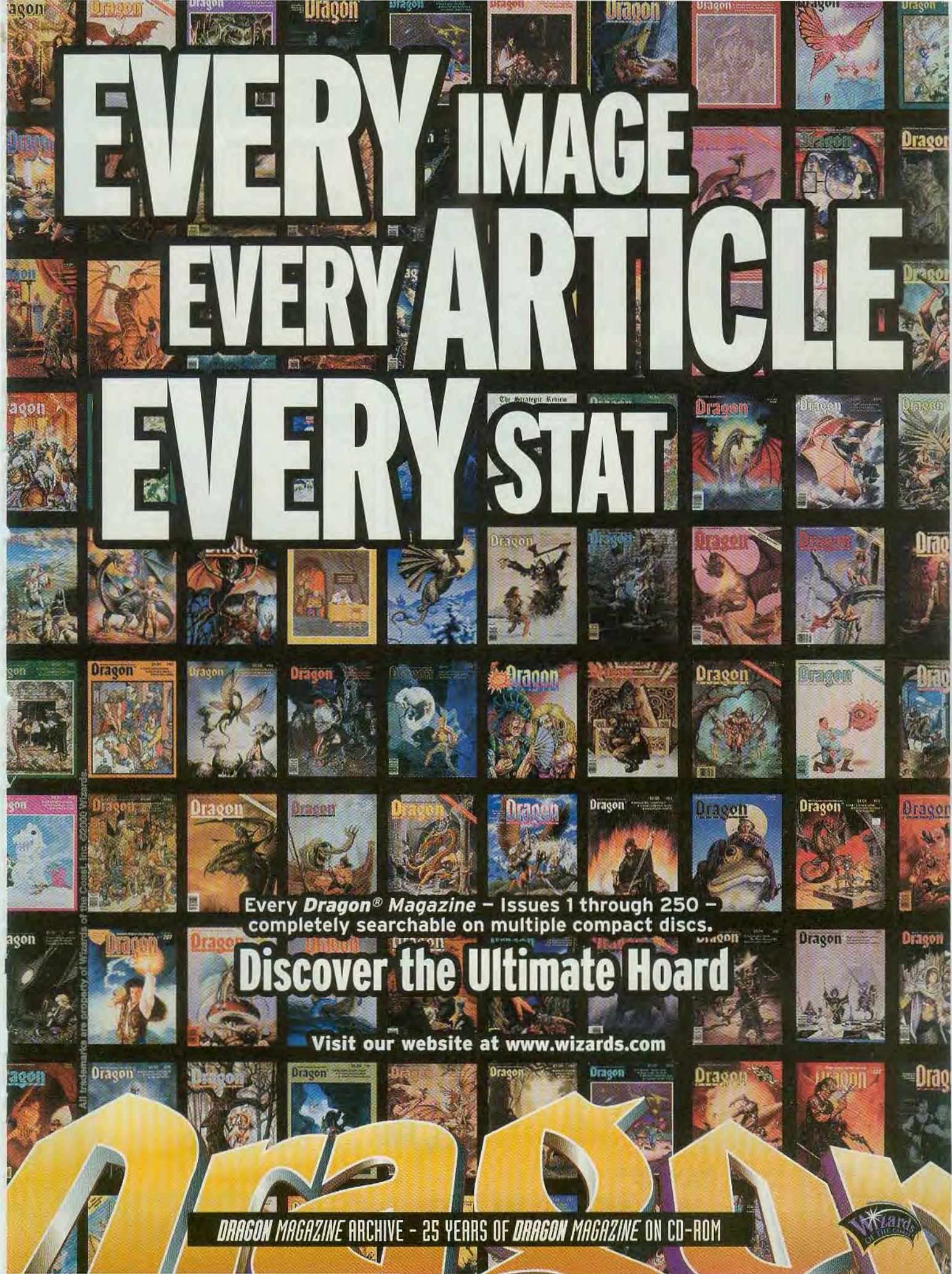
Today

Rob Lazzaretti and Todd Gamble are now getting ready to begin work on the maps for the relaunch of the massive FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign setting, which calls for some incredibly detailed mapping to bring it all to life. They're also preparing an exceptional amount of work for the upcoming *Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil*, due out in mid-2001. "We've had a few meetings with the designer about it," Rob says, "and it looks like it's going to be *huge*." Compared to the fifteen or so maps in the *Player's Handbook* and *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* combined, Rob anticipates as many as thirty maps in *Return to the Temple of Elemental Evil*. Of course, there's still an astonishing amount of new D&D material to prepare.

What advice do the pros have for DMs who will soon be making maps of their own? For the amateur cartographer, thinking ahead will save you a great deal of grief when you begin to draft your own maps. "Plan your world from the ground up," Rob suggests. "If you're building a whole world, think about how the continents are going to fit on it, then narrow down to focus on the area of your adventure. If you branch out from the city where you want your adventure to begin, it can get really messy. Think on a God-like scale."

Not surprisingly, both Rob and Todd have art degrees, and both men agree that understanding programs like *Photoshop* and familiarity with Macintoshes are vital if you want to pursue cartography as a profession. The ability to draw is invaluable, of course. "You can always find shortcuts when making your maps," Rob says, "but you really have to understand basic design to make any of this happen."

Drawing by hand is an essential skill to develop even though about 80% of a cartographer's time is spent working on the computer.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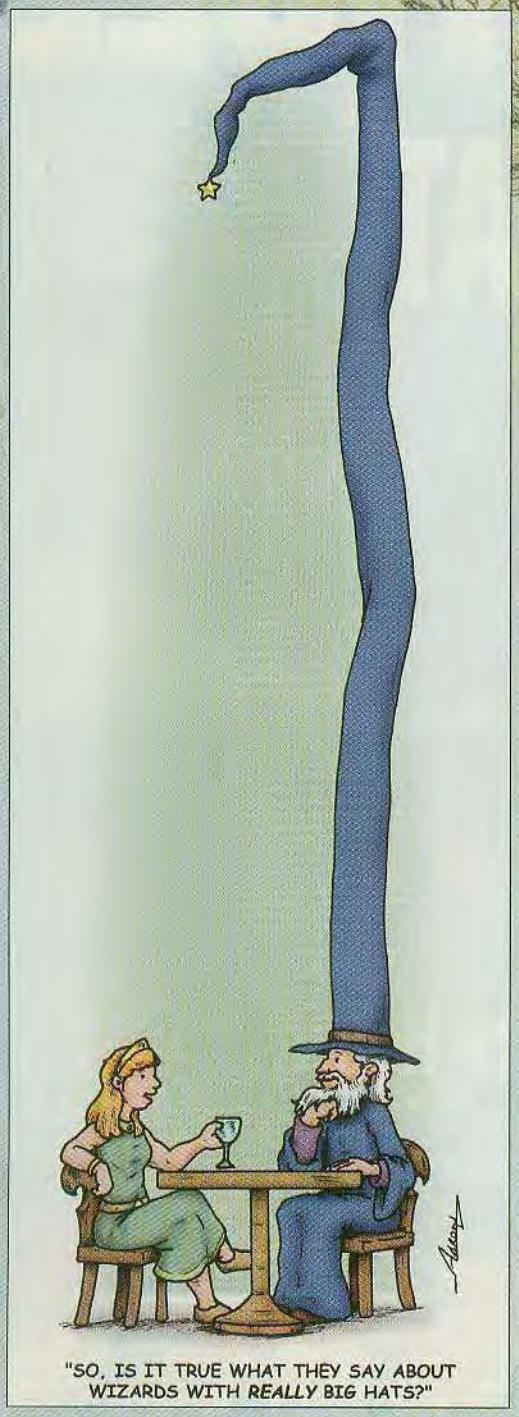
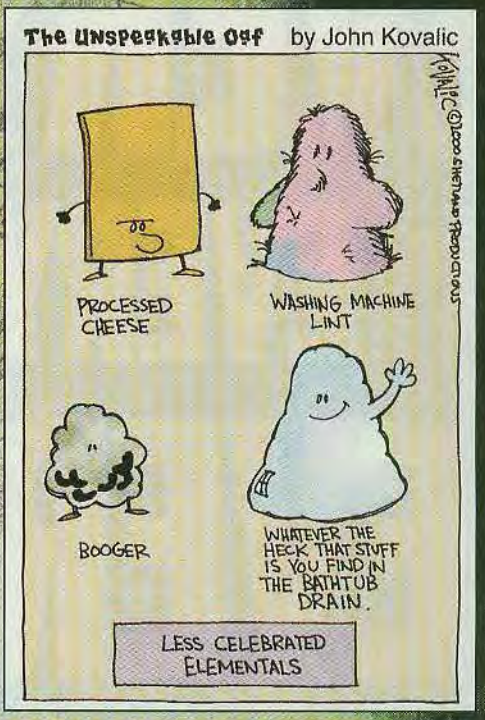


"SO, IS IT TRUE WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT WIZARDS WITH *REALLY* BIG HATS?"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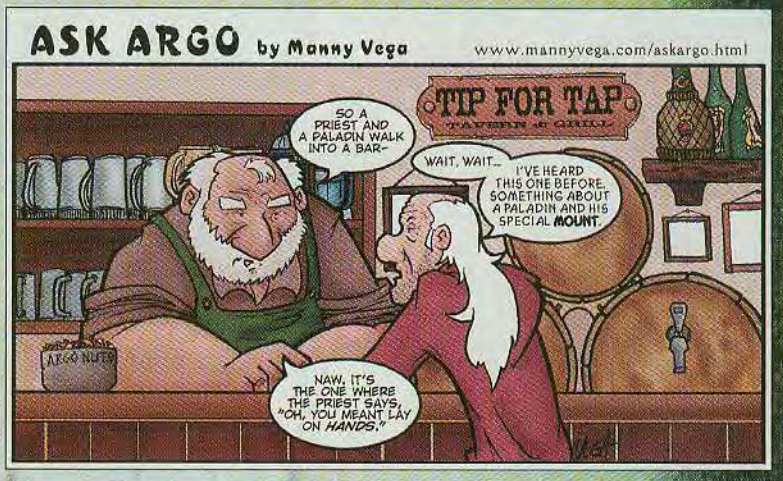
WASHING MACHINE LINT
BOOGER
WHATEVER THE HECK THAT STUFF IS YOU FIND IN THE BATHTUB DRAIN.
LESS CELEBRATED ELEMENTALS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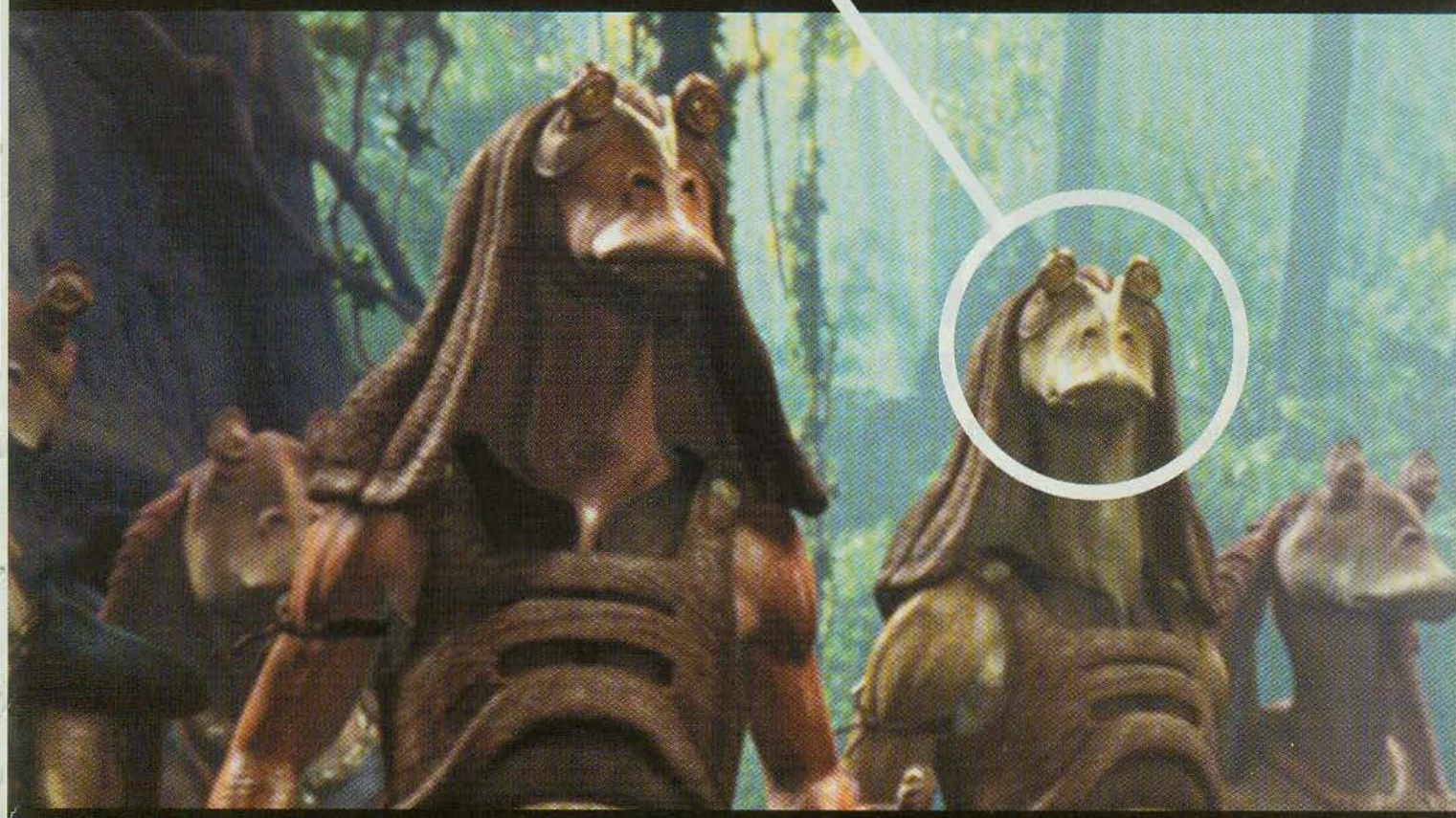
TIP FOR TAP
SO A PRIEST AND A PALADIN WALK INTO A BAR-
WAIT, WAIT... I'VE HEARD THIS ONE BEFORE. SOMETHING ABOUT A PALADIN AND HIS SPECIAL MOUNT.
NAW, IT'S THE ONE WHERE THE PRIEST SAYS, "OH, YOU MEANT LAY ON *HANDS*."

"Are you eyeballin' me!?!"

WHAT'S THIS GUY'S STORY?



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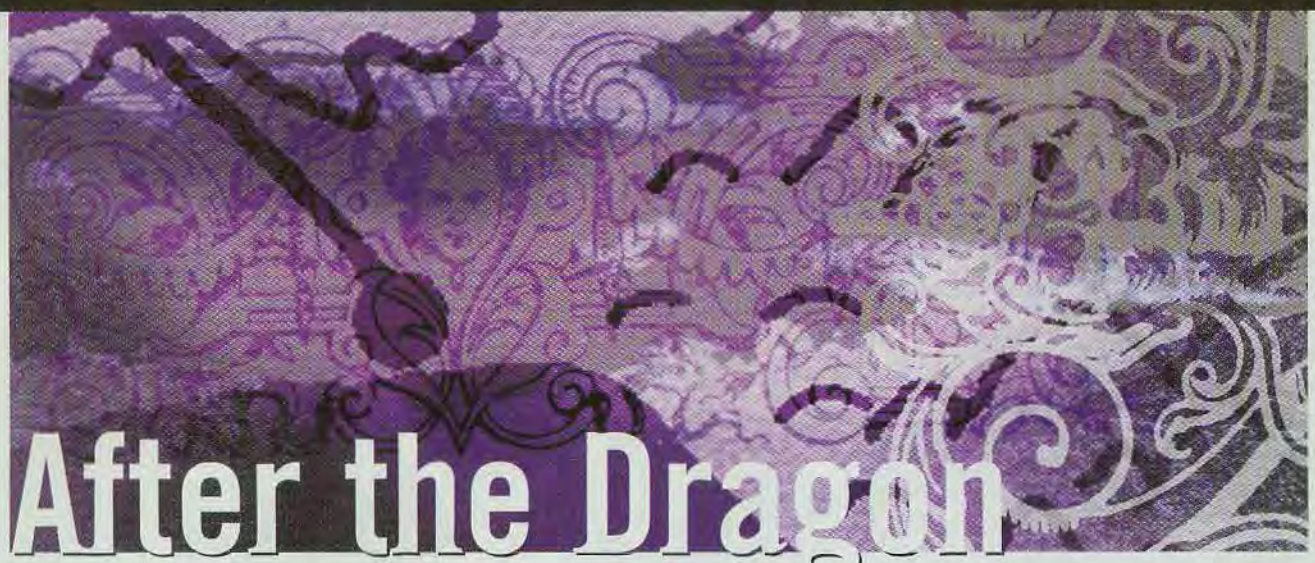


After the Dragon

The Kingdom of Cormyr Today

by Ed Greenwood • illustrated by Rob Hinds

It would take three Annuals to examine the events recounted in the novel Death of the Dragon, *and another to summarize the ranks, strength, and behind-the-scenes power struggles currently unfolding within the Purple Dragons of Cormyr, so here's an admittedly fragmentary overview of the situation at court in Cormyr right after the events of the novel.*

The armies of Cormyr have been decimated, along with much of the fighting nobility. Orc and goblin bands hold Arabel and roam its vicinity, burning and blighting crops across the realm. Granaries in Suzail and the naval base in Marsember survived, so starvation doesn't quite threaten the realm. But shortages have already driven provender prices up sharply and made (in the words of Royal Sage Alaphondar) "a dent one can certainly notice in the royal treasury."

King Azoun IV and his heir, the Crown Princess Tanalasta, perished in the fighting, as did Gwennath, Lady-Lord High Marshal of Cormyr, and many others of note.

Tanalasta's infant son, Azoun V, is king, but the realm is ruled by the Steel Regent, Princess Alusair Nacacia Obarskyr. Much of the real power is held by the Dowager Dragon Queen, Azoun's widow, Filfaeril, and the Royal Magician Vangerdahast.

The Obarskyr rule in Cormyr remains secure largely because the War Wizards are alertly and vigilantly prepared to back it. A strong rebel faction of War Wizards or a Royal Magician opposed to the Crown would mean disaster for the Forest Kingdom. Even nobles who grumble at every royal edict and change of clothing acknowledge: "Well, at least we have Vangerdahast, gods strike him!"

THE ROYAL REMAINS

In keeping with ancient Cormyrian tradition (actually at the command of Vangerdahast, who judged it good for Cormyr's morale), the spell-preserved remains of King Azoun and Crown Princess Tanalasta were paraded through Suzail. The tour took a wide circuit around the city that ended at the Palace.

War Wizard magic was ready to ward off anything hurled at the procession. Other spells levitated the open coffins so their weight could be easily borne by scarred veteran soldiers, the most beautiful ladies among the War Wizards, and the oldest, most loyal nobles who'd fought alongside the King. Vangerdahast also shamelessly used magic to make the corpses smile, testily calling it "the last thanks they can give their people" when Alusair objected.

The Steel Regent and the Dowager Queen walked at the head of the procession; Alusair insisted on wearing her armor, still bloodstained, dirt-caked, and sword-scarred from the battlefield, and bearing her drawn sword.

A visiting Sembian merchant, Harondro of Yhaunn, who watched the procession discreetly from an upper window along the Promenade, said it was hard to tell who wept harder: the citizens or the royal women. There were no drums or horns; save for the crying and the sounds of people's boots on the cobbles, it all happened in eerie silence.

Harondo also said that for the first time in his life, he was terrified of the

commoners of Suzail; as the procession approached, without any coaching or command, they all knelt or saluted, according to their rank, and pressed forward to touch someone in the procession. They thereafter fell silent and followed the funeral train. By the time the funeral procession reached the Palace, it seemed that "almost the entire city" was walking behind old Bastable Galarth, oldest of the Purple Dragons to survive the Dragonfall Battle. He walked alone behind the coffins in his own battered armor, carrying the riven shield of his dead King in his gnarled hands.

When the royal remains vanished into the Palace, the citizens turned to talk, reminisce, and pray at impromptu altars set up by priests of every faith and stripe save the most evil. Thereafter, they roamed the city from tavern to tavern, raging in their grief and looking ready to tear apart any foe of Cormyr—or anyone they saw as such—with their bare hands.

Harondro saw a shipmaster from Westgate, who made the mistake of laughing at a jest, vanish under the furious fists and clawing hands of fat Cormyrian goodwives, who screamed the names of dead sons, husbands, and relatives as they struck. Above all rose constant keening of "For Azoun!" and "The Purple Dragon!"

Cloaked in protective magics, Azoun and Tanalasta were interred in the Royal Crypt, deep beneath the Palace of the Purple Dragon. His Majesty was laid to rest in his armor, clasping his sword on his breast and wearing the recently-fashioned Lion Crown, a rugged circlet made to be worn over his battle-helm. The Crown Princess sleeps forever beside him in gray mage-robes, clasping the workbooks she kept as she learned magic. Both lie in separate closed coffins among magical defenses that Vangerdahast describes only as "offering more than one deadly surprise to anyone who ventures too near without knowing just how to do so." (Knowledge of the proper approach is said to be shared by the Royal Magician, Lady Laspeera of the War Wizards, Royal Sage Alapahondar, the Steel Regent, the Dowager Queen, and at least two others: one within the realm and one without.)

His Majesty was laid to rest in his armor, clasping his sword on his breast.

No memorial was raised at the site of either royal passing, for as Filfaeril said, "I do not want to look at where my Azoun died and see a stone."

Courtiers agree that the real reason no memorial stones were placed was to prevent them becoming rallying-places for foes of the Crown. However, in a rumor widely suspected to be true, the Royal Magician is said to have snarled, "Aye, let stones be raised and let them gather: I can blast them to ashes in groups and waste fewer spells on such scum, saving my power for rebuilding the realm."

VANGERDAHAST USED MAGIC TO MAKE THE CORPSES SMILE, CALLING IT "THE LAST THANKS THEY CAN GIVE THEIR PEOPLE."

After the tolling of bells marked the burial, trumpeters sounded fanfares in the dusk and the reign of Azoun V was proclaimed, with mention of the Regency and the blessings of the Dowager Queen. The infant king was not shown to the people until the Royal Anointing and promenade three days later, wherein the nobles of the realm swore fealty to the Regent and then paraded their war strength before the surviving royals and the citizenry of Suzail.

Azoun Rhigaerd Palaghard Duar Obarskyr, Dragon Prince of Cormyr, Right Royal Duke of Suzail, and King Ascendant of the Dragon Throne, Stagmaster of the Realm and Lord Admiral of the Western Fallen Star Waves, is a vocal, chubby-cheeked babe with dark hair; piercing, gold-flecked brown eyes; and an already strong-looking forehead, nose, and jaw. In the words of one of his wetnurses, Alatha of Brokenturrets, "Aye, he'll be charming the ladies at an even greener age than his sire."

Not counting the War Wizards spying from afar, and equipped with teleport rings that battle-mages can use to be at the royal side in a breath or two, Azoun V is at all times surrounded by three wetnurses and two physics. There are in fact three shifts of such persons—all human females rumored to be War Wizards, Harpers, or both.

These Attendants of the Royal Person are always augmented by a Royal Guard (known as "the Brat's Bodyguard," in the barracks), of 4 War Wizards, 4 warriors, and 2 pages to run errands and deliver messages.

The Cormyte Regency

- The Regent speaks and acts as a ruling monarch, with all rank, titles, and courtesies, but cannot exile, imprison, endanger, or end the life of any Obarskyr or throne heir, nor commit such regals to marriage or the judgments of foreign powers, nor accept their abdication or renunciation of crown or birth rights.

- A Regent cannot bind Cormyr or its troops, monies, or territory in any disposition, arrangement, or pact with foreign powers intended or agreed-upon to outlast the Regency.

- A Regent can execute any being only for treason or murder, and then only with the avowed public agreement of at least three senior peers of the realm not related by blood or marriage to the Regent or to each other. One of the peers must be a serving Purple Dragon officer or War Wizard not related by blood or marriage to the Regent or the other supporters.

- Should the Regent predecease the King Ascendant, another regent shall be appointed by the Dowager Queen, or grimfollow (failing her survival) by the Royal Magician, or grimfollow by the Royal Sage, or grimfollow by the head of the War Wizards at that time, unless Azoun V has reached his fourteenth year and is judged both fit and ready to rule by all of the surviving members of the list of appointers just given. If Vangerdahast still lives, the head of the War Wizards is considered a separate office for this judgment only, and their second-in-command (currently, the sorceress Laspeera) receives a vote in this judgment.

The boy King's father is said to be, in the words of the relevant royal proclamation: "Rowen Cormaeril, nobly born, a young man and true, who came to the gods-blessed union fully pardoned by the King—and who gave himself in the strife so that Cormyr could rise again."

Nothing more is said or confirmed about Rowen's fate or standing, and those who ask questions about such matters too loudly have received unwelcome visits from bands of War Wizards guarded by grim Purple Dragons who've warned citizens openly that they're just waiting for an excuse to sink their swords to the hilts in any traitor to the realm.

It's somehow become an open secret around the Dragon Court that the Royal Magician has taken blood and tissue samples of Azoun V, Alusair, and Filfaeril for use in cloning or other magics. He's said to have hidden sets of them in several places, none of which is the vault treasonously vandalized during "the Bleth Affair." Visitors are warned that this is considered a Crown secret. The penalty for speculating or discussing it—if overheard by or reported to the authorities—is imprisonment and unpleasant magical interrogation by War Wizards, followed by execution if treason of intent or action is discovered.

The Dragon Court

Alusair Nacacia Obarskyr rules in Suzail, though the Dragon Throne itself sits pointedly empty; she uses a lower chair but more often strides around the dais in front of the royal seat.

In the words of Vangerdahast: "Daughter must obey mother, but so long as that's done, Princess Alusair can be king in all but name until Azoun comes of age—which he shall do upon the seventeenth anniversary of his birth. If he is deemed in any way unfit to rule, the regency will continue, this decision being made only after agreement by a majority public vote of six senior War Wizards (nobles who are heads of houses that can trace their ennobled lineage back more than seven

hundred years), the Royal Sage, and any other surviving Obarksyrs."

The rules governing this Regency were crafted by Vangerdahast in light of the actions of Salember the Rebel, who refused to surrender the realm to the rightful Obarskyr, Rhigaerd, and in brief are described to the left.

In truth, much of the day-to-day governance of Cormyrian affairs is, as always, in Vangerdahast's hands. However, recent events have so shaken the usual order of things at the Dragon Court that the individual deeds and decisions of the three most powerful Cormyrians will most shape the realm in the years ahead.

PURPLE DRAGONS WARN CITIZENS OPENLY THAT THEY'RE JUST WAITING FOR AN EXCUSE TO SINK THEIR SWORDS TO THE HILTS IN ANY TRAITOR TO THE REALM.

THE ROYAL MAGICIAN AND COURT WIZARD OF CORMYR

Vangerdahast

(male human, Wiz18, LN)
(1224 DR-)

Vangerdahast can call on a vast array of magic items, including many battle-ready rings and wands, and he won't hesitate to do so.

Rightly called by many (though it's not wise to say so openly at Court) "the true ruler of Cormyr," this long-lived, stout, plain-spoken, and often testy mage tutored Azoun and his children, and he remains the Crown's most trusted advisor. He often wears a plain, heavy brown robe, bound about the waist with a tasseled rope of pale mauve. A gruff man who has little patience for courtly fripperies, he adheres firmly to court etiquette save in emergencies.

Vangerdahast is known to have trained briefly, and long ago, under the archmage Elminster, and, he now maintains a running, if friendly, feud with the Old Mage. The reasons for this, and other details of Vangey's life and magical training, are subjects the Royal Magician does not discuss. Nor should he ever be addressed as "Vangey" by persons desiring to comfortably abide in Cormyr thereafter.

When not at Filfaeril's side, Vangerdahast is often giving orders to the senior War Wizards. He's proud of the loyal brotherhood of mages he leads, considers them essential to the survival and good governance of Cormyr, and he is determined never to let them grow over-proud, corrupt, or treacherous toward the crown.

Recent rumors of his own hunger to rule and possible treason are just that: rumors. The most probing gossips and enemies looking for scandals to trumpet have been unable to learn anything of possible consorts or a private life outside of court, though court legend whispers of a hut in the forest from which Vangerdahast came, and to which, some day—none too soon for the liking of many—he'll return.

Vangerdahast is paunchy and jowly and has a close-trimmed beard and well-kept hair of white, formerly reddish-brown hue. His eyes are dark brown and kindle almost to red when he's enraged. Otherwise, his manner is kindly but stern, and during court ceremonies he can be solemn, dignified, and impressive.

The people of Cormyr respect him as a good and loyal man, though his wizardly powers awe them; outside Suzail, his entrance into an inn or shop typically causes a hush.

Since the death of his longtime friend Azoun IV, Vangerdahast has aged visibly. His hands often tremble now, he walks more slowly, and he's seen in public less often. Interestingly, no less a personage than Lord Giogi Wyvernspur recently witnessed Vangerdahast watching a lone, cowled figure—a human woman, by her shape—cast spells in the depths of the King's Forest before both of them disappeared "within a shimmering."

THE DOWAGER DRAGON QUEEN

Queen Filfaeril Selazair Obarskyr

(female human, Ftr3, NG)
(Mirtul 4, 1311 DR-)

The Dragon Queen is a brilliant, insightful woman (and master chess player) who holds clearer foresight of future events and intrigues yet hatching than anyone in the Forest Kingdom save Vangerdahast. Her fragile, delicate beauty conceals stubborn bravery and a mind that notices everything. She has little interest in warfare and in doings outside Cormyr, and spends most of her time sizing up folk who come to court, learning of their doings and moods so as to be of help to the regent in her judgements. She's never really overcome the death of her first child, Foril (a son born Mirtul 1, 1332, who died on Uktar 11, 1334 at the hands of an assassin); those who wish to anger or wound her need only recall Foril to her.

Although Filfaeril's not physically strong, she's very quick and deft. Since Foril's death, she's taken private weapons-training with dagger, spear, and shortsword. Though she's rarely faced would-be assassins, she's surprised (and wounded) several unsuccessful kidnappers.

Since the deaths of Azoun and Tanalasta, the Queen has become colder and harder; it's clear she misses Azoun's embrace as well as his friendship. She's taken no lovers from among the many elder nobles who've discreetly offered her their embraces, though she's been much seen in the company of the Royal Sage of late, and gossips never tire of reminding Cormyrian society that the two of them went into hiding somewhere together during the Bleth Affair.

Filfaeril has ice-blue eyes, blonde hair, a slender figure, and alabaster-white skin; she retains a poise and dignity that makes up for the slow fade of her once-stunning beauty. She and Azoun were far more equal partners than most ruling couples of Faerûn, and her influence helped make the court a civilized, cultural place. (In earlier times, it was all too apt to be a succession of drunken revels and duels between feuding nobles.)

THE KNIGHTS ROYAL

Outside the Palace, Filfaeril travels at all times with a loyal personal bodyguard of six tall, armed, and capable highknights (each a LG human male Ftrg/HighKnight5) who bear the titles of Knights Royal of Cormyr. These men (formerly the Kings' Blades, the personal guards of Azoun IV) are Jostlyn Huntsilver, Asbras Orthwood, Baeryn Dauntinghorn, Albryn Emmarask, Ondyn Thundersword, and Ilbreth Truesilver.

They wear small, everbright-treated silver pendants at their throats, each shaped like an upright, right-handed gauntlet, with the Purple Dragon inset in its open palm. These are passkeys only slightly lesser in rank than the fabled Purple Dragon rings. At all times,

New Prestige Class: Purple Dragon Highknight

A highknight of Cormyr is a recently created rank of service to the Crown. Trained in Court etiquette and realm law as well as in the use of weapons, highknights are regularly mind-read by War Wizards to guarantee their continued loyalty, as well as to guard against magical influences or impostors posing as real knights. Highknights usually draw difficult duties, such as investigating suspected traitors among the ranks of superior Purple Dragon officers or the nobility, or guarding royalty or unpopular visiting envoys.

In Cormyr, highknights speak with royal authority, and they can always gain audience to any royal or Court personage (though they'll face penalties for frivolous use of this privilege).

Most highknights are fighters, but Filfaeril and Vangerdahast (joint creators of this rank) desire the office to be open to bards, rangers, and other persons difficult to fit into the normal Court hierarchy. Rowen Cormaeril, for example, has been accorded the rank of highknight, as has his brother Beliard, bladebrother to Alusair and bastard son of Azoun IV. Both would otherwise share exile with the rest of their family.

Highknights can be encountered anywhere in the Dragonreach and Dragon Coast, but they are most likely to be found in Cormyr proper.

Requirements

To qualify to become a highknight, a character must fulfill all of the following criteria:

Alignment: Any good
Race: Any
Base Attack Bonus: +8
Feats: Dodge, Endurance, Great Fortitude

Class Skills

The highknight's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis). Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The highknight is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Pick Pocket, and Tumble.

Dauntless Guard: Beginning at 1st level, when a highknight guards a known or familiar area in accordance with orders, such as a single room, doorway, or passage, he gains the following abilities while fighting in that area:

- +2 Strength
- +2 Constitution
- +2 resistance bonus on all saves
- +4 dodge bonus to AC

The increase in Constitution raises the highknight's hit points by 1 point per level, but these hit points go away the moment the highknight moves away from the area or ceases fighting or defying possible foes. This is an extraordinary ability.

Poison Resistance: At 5th level, a highknight gains a second chance on Fortitude saves vs. any poison once per day (gases included); if the result of the first save is unfavorable, a second roll can be attempted. At 10th level, immunity to secondary damage becomes automatic. This is a supernatural ability.

Magic Resistance: At 3rd level, by exposure to spells (working with a War Wizard), the highknight gains resistance to a single chosen magical attack form, such as cold, electricity, fire, or acid. During each round of damage from that sort of magic, subtract 1 point from each die of damage suffered by the highknight. This immunity improves to 2 points per die at 6th level and 3 points per die at 9th level. This is a supernatural ability.

Natural Armor: The highknight's natural armor rating improves by +1 at 4th level, and an additional +1 at 8th level. This is an extraordinary ability.

Uncanny Dodge: At 2nd level, the highknight does not lose his Dexterity bonus to AC from being flat-footed. At 7th level, opponents do not gain any attack bonuses for flanking the highknight.

The Highknight — Hit Die: d10

Level	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+0	+0	Dauntless guard
2	+2	+3	+0	+0	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC)
3	+3	+3	+1	+1	Magic resistance 1
4	+4	+4	+1	+1	Natural armor +1
5	+5	+4	+1	+1	Poison resistance
6	+6	+5	+2	+2	Magic resistance 2
7	+7	+5	+2	+2	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)
8	+8	+6	+2	+2	Natural armor +2
9	+9	+6	+3	+3	Magic resistance 3
10	+10	+7	+3	+3	Poison resistance (immunity to secondary damage)

Level: The level of the highknight.
Attack Bonus: The highknight's attack bonus, added to the character's normal attack bonus.
Fort. Save: The save bonus on Fortitude saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.
Ref. Save: The save bonus on Reflex saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.
Will Save: The save bonus on Will saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.
Special: Level-dependent class features.

Though few nobles want to admit it, Alusair is now the best battlemaster in the realm.

they permit passage into any part of any royal fortress, as well as access to any member of the royal family or any court or military official, up to and including Vangerdahast himself. Unlike the Purple Dragon rings, they don't compel enforced obedience from such officials, though such a person would be wise to treat the bearer of such a pendant as a superior officer.

Each Knight Royal has three full knights squired to him as understudies, and from the ranks of these "rising knights," impromptu bodyguards can quickly be assembled for all Obarskyrs and court officers desiring or needing protection at any time.

THE STEEL REGENT

Princess Alusair Nacacia Obarskyr
(female human, Ftr20, CG)
(Eleint 9, 1335 DR-)

A rebellious tomboy in youth, the hot-tempered, impulsive youngest child of Azoun and Filfaeril rose to prominence in the realm (and won a place in the hearts of the common folk) for her valiant fighting against the Tuigan hordes.

Her contrary nature when dealing with her father and resulting extended absences from the realm stem from the impatience she inherited from Azoun—save that she got thrice what he ever had.

Accomplished in battle, strategy, hard living, and the mastery of horses, Alusair has spent most of her life fighting and riding the Stonelands with noble sons and heirs of the realm who admiringly dubbed her "the Steel Princess" for her battle-prowess and spirit. Though few nobles want to admit it, Alusair is now the best battlemaster (general) in the realm—though better in raids and skirmishes than in matters of diplomacy and pomp.

As Alusair grew older, shattering a lot of her youthful ideals on the hard swordpoints of reality, she became much closer to her father. She still lacks patience for the endless revels, gossip, and meaningless Court ceremonies.

Alusair has ash-blonde hair but black eyebrows. Although she stands as tall as any knight in her mithril plate armor, she strikes the eye as slimmer and more agile than most warriors wearing the Purple Dragon. The armor, a gift of the dwarves, earned her the nickname "the Mithril Princess," a term largely ignored these days in the shadow of the more popular "Steel Princess" appellation.

Her eyes are oak-brown, and at their corners, her face is just beginning to acquire its first wrinkles.

Alusair was reconciled with Azoun when they fought the Tuigan horde, and she subsequently rode on patrol with Purple Dragons stationed throughout Cormyr, trying to learn all she could of the kingdom so she could serve it ably as a battlemaster.

Now that her Regency has come, Alusair has discovered she hates Court life and diplomacy every bit as much as she feared she would. Her anger at her role makes her precise, clear, and cold in her diplomatic dealings, but the wise advice of Vangey and Filfaeril, coupled with her own battlefield experience, means that she misses few nuances and usually does the right thing.

Her primary aim now is to rebuild the morale and military strength of the realm by reclaiming all Cormyrian territory and getting folk back onto their land. She must do this without letting investors from Sembia and Westgate get too firm a hold in Cormyr, and she rebuffs all attempts to control and influence Cormyrian affairs.

So long as she can pour her rage out in occasional sword-bouts or private wrestling sessions with "the Blades" (the young nobles she's ridden to war with and trusts implicitly), Alusair will be a good and increasingly contented Regent. Helming a kingdom is a task she's good at, and the death of her father—a fate he foresaw and embraced, as she sees it, because he would not flee his duty—has given her determination not to ruin the realm for the next Azoun. She is also determined to avoid being goaded by clever-tongued envoys into doing things that aren't in Cormyr's best interests.

Loyal and True

Though it's blunt truth that the Obarskyr rule continues because the War Wizards alertly and vigilantly support it, the fact that the bulk of the populace is highly loyal, and there are specific people the Crown can call upon and trust is also crucial to the stability of the Dragon Throne. Some key friends of the Crown to watch (all of whom, by the way, know of one or more secret ways into the Palace and/or the Court) include:

Cat and Giogi Wyvernspur
(human female, Ari6, CG;
human male, Ari7, CG)
This noble couple prefers to avoid political prominence. They are unpopular in many circles because Azoun IV awarded them the Cormaeril lands, but they're useful in ferreting out conspiracies, shifting loyalties, and hidden schemes by means of Giogi's buffoonery at feasts and revels, and Cat's careful observations of the reactions to Giogi.

OBARSKYR RULE CONTINUES BECAUSE THE WAR WIZARDS VIGILANTLY SUPPORT IT.

Glarasteer Rhauligan
(human male, Ftr9, CG)
An irreverent and independent-minded Harper and sometime lover of Alusair, this traveling merchant often visits Sembian clients. He is trusted by the Steel Regent to truthfully and perceptively let her know who's doing what in Cormyr and Sembia, as well as changing moods and conditions in the Dragonreach in general. He's possessed of iron calm when necessary, with hair that's starting to gray and wrists as strong as steel. He usually faces danger with merriment. (See *Cormyr: A Novel* and "The Grinning Ghost of Taverton Hall" in *Realms of Mystery*.)

Emthrara Amberdown
(human female, Ftr7/Rog6, CG)
A tavern dancer and courtesan of Suzail known intimately to many at Court, this spirited, quick-witted, and good-natured Harper agent often works with Rhauligan, has saved royal lives on diverse occasions, and is known for her skill with a thrown dagger.

Alaphondar Emmarask
(human male, Ari9, NG)
Sage Most Learned of the Royal Court Alaphondar is an expert on the history, genealogy, and laws of Cormyr, Sembia, and the Dragon Coast. He is a diplomatic, farsighted, self-effacing man who's become Filfaeril's lover and confidant (though it's dangerous to speak of such matters publicly).

Myrmeen Lhal
(human female, Rgr13, CG)
Myrmeen is the righteous Lady of Arabel and a fearless battle-leader who's itching to reclaim that city. Gravely injured in the fighting, she's become a firm friend of Alusair, often serving as the Regent's sword in places Alusair can't spare the time to visit. (See page 28 of *Cloak & Dagger*.)

Laspeera Naerinth
(human female, Wiz16, NG)
Laspeera was made Lady Eveningspire two summers ago by Azoun IV (who awarded her the Eveningspire estate from Crown lands near the eastern end of Hullack Forest). Second-in-command of the War Wizards and proprietress of the House of Grace school for young ladies in Suzail, Laspeera is a diplomatic, careful, beautiful woman of great wisdom and discretion, legendary for her patience, perceptiveness, and the iron will beneath her gentleness.

Privately, Laspeera welcomes the rule of women, but she sees her own task as "taming Alusair, with spells used like whips, if need be, to make her the leader Cormyr needs."

Lord Dauneth Marliir
(human male, Ftr11, LG)
Thomdor's successor as Lord High Warden of the Eastern Marches, this honorable noble is known to have been the King's favorite intended husband for Tanalasta, though those close to the royal family say she liked but never loved him.

The youngest son of the Marliir family, he participated in the Redlance Rising, later supported Salember financially, and then tried to evade tax payments to King Rhigaerd II. Dauneth was treated somewhat coldly when he presented himself at Court because of his lineage, but he acquitted himself with loyalty and discretion.

Though many envy his swift elevation, his courteous manners and discretion have impressed. As one of the wealthiest nobles at court, he can't be snubbed—quite—and with his loyalty, unfailing politeness, and swift grasp of situations, he's of ever-growing importance to the Crown.

Dauneth stands a very slim 6 feet tall but seems awkward—all gawky, bony knees-and-elbows. He has level gray eyes and sandy brown hair. Accomplished with longsword and dagger, he's taken extensive weapons-training since being named Warden—and he still likes to try wielding "trollswords" (huge 10-foot-long wavy-bladed swords) that he can barely lift.

The Fair Flower of Nobility

It would take a book thicker than the city walls of Suzail to detail the lineages, holdings, doings, and aims of the living Cormyrian nobles. As they tend to be wealthy, strong-willed, and self-indulgent, noble families of Cormyr embrace a very wide range of hobbies, vocations, political views, and opinions on just about everything. Barring a few specific grievances, it's almost impossible to truthfully say "The Orthwoods feel that ..." because Auldo Orthwood, Danither Orthwood, and their mother Malassra Orthwood probably bitterly disagree on all sorts of things, from the color of bathchamber hangings in Orthwood Hall to obedience towards the current Regent.

So here's a very brief summary of individual nobles the Crown is taking special notice of.

DISCONTENTED EXILES

Arphoind Bleth
(human male, Ftr9, LE)
The leader of the Bleths, Arphoind is known to be plotting against the Crown from Westgate. Grasping, scheming, and sneeringly sophisticated, he's also aging and growing indolent. Increasingly interested in Westgate, once he gets coin enough to compensate for the seized Bleth lands, Arphoind might completely lose interest in Cormyr.

Kargerth Cormaeril
(human male, Rog7, N)
The head of the other recently exiled house, Kargerth is thought to be sponsoring a new rash of smuggling through Marsember. The Cormaerils might hold grudges, but they're too sensible and too deeply loyal to openly strike against the Crown. Their hand is more likely to be raised in an attempt to cause "accidents" to befall individual Obarskyrs until the Dragon Throne passes into new, possibly more friendly hands.

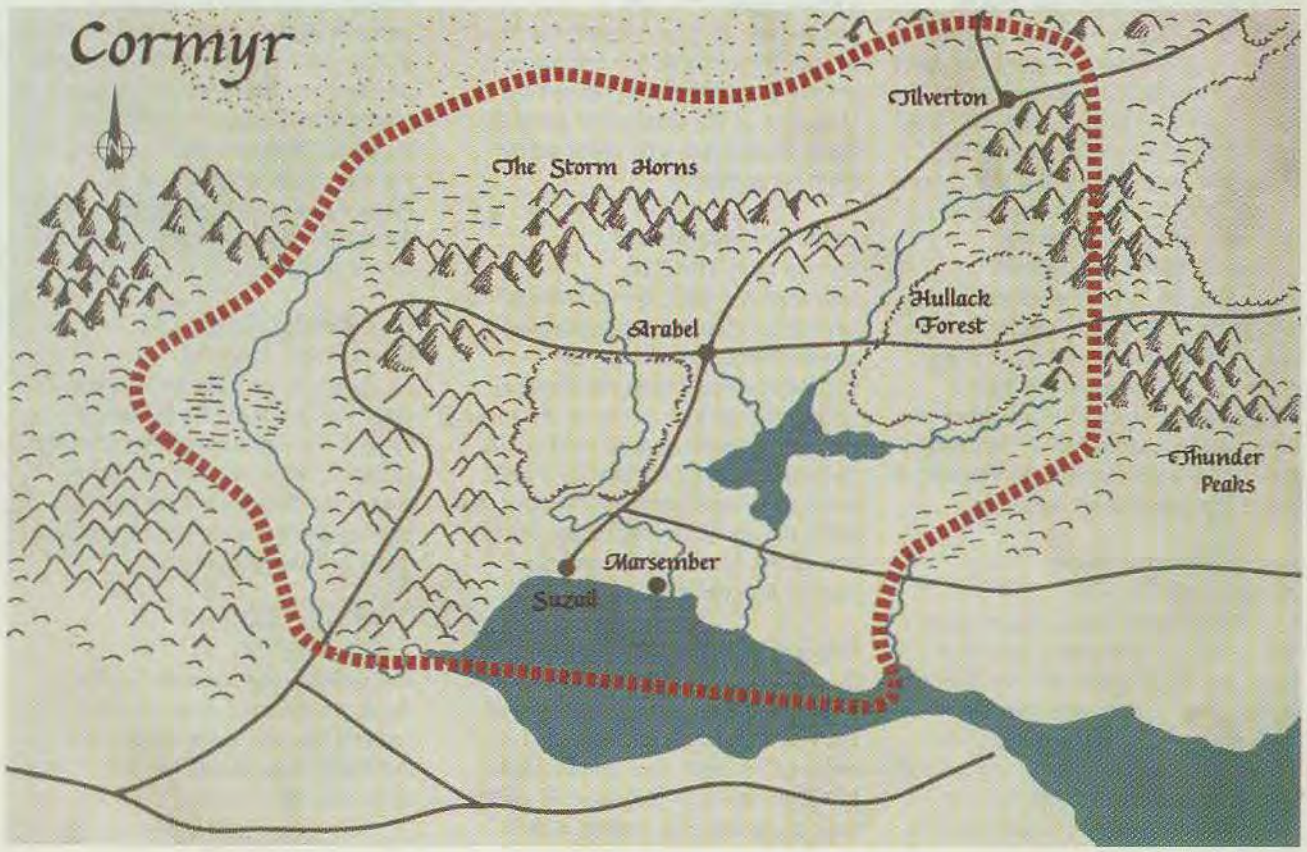
PROBABLE REBELS

Tystarn Dauntinghorn
(human male, Ftr3, CG)
Tystarn is a dashingly handsome young traveling-trader for Dauntinghorn interests whose jaunts have aroused War Wizard suspicions. (See page 57 of *Cloak & Dagger*.)

Ravos Calantar
(human male, Ftr5, CN)
Ravos is a dedicated stag-hunter and chaser-of-brigands who is bored with life and looking to do great things. He's now consumed with hatred for the Obarskyrs due to their execution of his aunt, the matriarch of his house (during *Death of the Dragon*).

Storn Tathcrown
(human male, Ftr7, NE)
The dark and brazenly handsome youngest son of a recently ennobled family, Storn hungers for money and power. He is known for his agility and cleverness and is said to possess an iron self-control.

He fought alongside the Obarskyrs in the defense of Arabel but made sure to avoid dying in the Dragonfall Battle by posing as an envoy between Giogi



Wyvernspur on Jester's Green and the main army under the King.

Storn sees taking the throne as his best way to wealth, and the clearest path to achieve that is to marry Alusair and then dispose of the other Obarskyrs in an "accident." He's wary of the War Wizards' mind-scrying—with good reason, for they've already reported his treasonous thoughts to Laspeera and Vangerdahast. So far, he's done nothing, but arranging a trap for him is something on the War Wizards' "to do" list.

CLEAVING TO SEMBIA

Emlar Goldsword

(human male, Ftr4/Rog4, CN)
Emlar is a greedy mercenary who hates and fears the Obarskyrs (he came within an inch of being executed in *Death of the Dragon*), and he would prefer a Cormyr ruled by a merchant council. He was judged a possible sponsor of rebels by the Crown but is both too cowardly and too wise to actively rebel.

Belmer Huntcrown

(human male, Ftr3/Rog3, NE)
A toad-faced, fat middling son of a many-branched family, this quietly ambitious collector-of-wines is shoulder-deep in Sembian intrigues and quiet investment cabals. He specializes in forging business alliances between timid merchants who recoil from trading companies and costers, and using their pooled funds to speculate on goods shortages and buy properties.

Thus far Sembian city holdings (having by far the greatest value among available properties in the territory he's familiar with) have been Belmer's chief interest, but he's increasingly looking at Marsember and the coastal lands east of it, and thinking of how much coin could be made if he quietly founded his own port...

Talados Thundersword

(human male, Ftr7, CN)
A brawling, hunt-loving young giant with a love of swordplay, plentiful wine, and even more plentiful women, Talados was gifted some Sembian investments by a dying uncle some years ago and has become very rich. He sees Suzail as ripe for buying, warehouse by shop by house, so that he can make his mark and earn respect back in Saerloon and Selgaunt. If the stiff-necked Obarskyrs would just allow themselves to be bought, they and their countryfolk could live in luxury in an ever-growing realm that would soon swallow the rest of the Dragon Coast.

UNSCRUPULOUS

Those nobles who care nothing for laws, allegiances, or appearances—save as such things affect their luxuries, profits, and lifestyles—this group has many members, but its most energetic proponents include:

Fraeyer Illance

(human male, Ftr6, NE)
Fraeyer is a tall, thin, darkly handsome and soft-spoken coldheart. He's one of the younger and better-traveled of this traditionally "difficult" family and is now the most energetic in promoting his family's interests, which follow the motto: "Freedom from all laws, and a spur to all profits, daggers for our foes, and a pox on all lawmakers and keepers."

Melot Silversword

(human male, Ftr4, CN)
The suave, aging, still-handsome head of the Silverswords is a self-serving, greedy man who deeply enjoys the pleasures of life despite the costs to those around him who might suffer from his appetites.

Lahadinol Longbrooke

(human male, Ftr8, LN)
Lahadinol is a bluff, burly, bearded man who cares only for appearances—he should always look heroic, the Obarskyrs should keep the kingdom strong and prosperous so it can serve him best as a playground, and so on. A coward at heart, Longbrooke always seeks to do and say the right thing—but when the goblin hordes come, he'll be one of the first to break and run, despite his splendid armor.

Dardreth Marliir

(human male, Ftr6/Rog6, CE)
A cold and calculating older son of the Marliirs, Dardreth regards his brother Dauneth as a servile idiot. Dardreth seeks to win true (if secret) rule of Arabel and endless riches thereby—just as soon as the Obarskyrs go to the trouble of winning the city back for him. Dardreth cares not who sits on the Dragon Throne or talks first at councils, so long as he can get both hands on the royal treasury whenever he desires.

DUNDERHEADS

The great bulk of nobles, like the commoners beneath them, are what Alaphondar is wont to call the "loyal, muddling dunderheads."

Of these, those showing some energy and ambition of late include:

Estelner Ebonhawk

(human male, Ftr5, NG)
Estelner is the young, nervous Baron of newly-created Warmshores (the hilly coastal country west of Suzail where the western edge of Cormyr meets the Dragonmere). Warned often by royal agents to guard his crops well because the realm needs them (that need will make his fortune), Estelner is eager to show well in royal eyes and become someone important.

Forlgar Silverhorn

(human male, Ftr6, LG)
Forlgar is the Earl of Starwater, a recently-founded territory consisting of the eastern bank of the Starwater across from Marsember. Forlgar is an old veteran Purple Dragon known for his girth, stubbornness, and slow wits. He was made an earl both as a reward and to catch smugglers who, during the fighting made unchecked use of his lands.

Lord Brestim Talcontin

(human male, Ftr5, LG)
An aging "dapper dandy," Brestim returned rich from life in Amn to wrench his way through Suzail's "high society." There he's fast becoming known for amusingly thick-headed utterances and deeds—and a monacle that's constantly flying off.

UP-AND-COMERS

The ambitious or recently fortunate, these are the ones to watch. They are tackling life with some energy and will inevitably make things happen as they spectacularly succeed or fail, notably:

Brester Orthwood
(human male, Ftr3, NG)
The most restless and competent son of this recently-ennobled house, Brester is a man who gallops wildly into the thick of whatever is his latest enthusiasm. His fancies don't last long, but he managed to becoming enthused with fighting at just the right time for Cormyr and was noticed doing so; Crown agents are watching him to see if he'll make something of himself—or fall under the influence of evil folk or foes of the Crown.

Darvaer Huntinghorn
(human male, Ftr5, CG)
A master huntsman and sometime sponsor of adventuring bands to make forays into the Stonelands, this young noble is smart, self-effacing, courteous, and doing exactly what the Crown hopes all nobles will do. He's a bit too good to be true, and Crown agents are closely watching his forays against trolls, goblins, and orcs in the Stonelands—in case he turns out to be secretly meeting with Zhentarim or worse.

Elvran Torchtower
(human male, Ftr6, CG)
One of the few nobles of this youngest generation to seem eager and happy doing sword-service with the Purple Dragons, this tall, quiet, competent man is being watched to see if he'll make a good battle-officer. He's already a lionar, and he might yet become one of the youngest ever battle-masters of Cormyr.

IN FAVOR

Barandos Hawklin
(human male, Ftr7, LN)
"The Hawk of Hawklin," remains as popular and prosperous as ever. This keen-witted, shrewd investor is as debonair with the ladies as ever, but he has held to his integrity through several covert War Wizard tests and earned much Crown respect thereby. Unshakably honest men are a rarity in any realm, and Barandos has the added talent of being a pleasant person, not the least sanctimonious or difficult. He's also one of the very few Cormyrians who places his coins where they'll do the most good for the realm first.

Barandos is no fool, however—and when others do him dirty, he likes to hire adventurers to get even for him rather than doing such dirty work himself.

Korvarr Rallyhorn
(human male, Ftr9, LG)
A valiant lionar of the Purple Dragons who resigned his rank due to the actions of his younger brother (as seen in *Death of the Dragon*), Korvarr marked himself for royal attention with his valor in aiding and defending Crown Princess Tanalasta. Shaken by what he saw of blood, death, and betrayal in the fighting, Korvarr has become the Crown's strongest ally among the nobles, quietly urging them to support this or that Crown suggestion or decree, pointing out both high and self-serving reasons to do so. War Wizards have suspiciously probed his thoughts on many occasions, looking for any sign of him building future treason but have found only guilt and a need to serve.

His rank was personally reinstated by Alusair (whom he's now hopelessly in love with), and Korvarr might well soon rise in royal service.

INCREASED TRADE IS WELCOMED, BUT AN INCREASED SEMBIAN OR WESTHAVIAN PRESENCE IS NOT.

STAUNCHLY LOYAL

The Crown traditionally counts "the Crown families" of Crownsilver, Huntsilver, and Truesilver as loyal, though their actions during the Bleth Affair have made the Obarskyrs look hard at them. The Wyvernspurs and Rowanmantles have both traditionally and recently demonstrated personal loyalty to Azoun IV and are also deemed loyal.

There are nobles, however, whose loyalty was proven during *Death of the Dragon*. Many of them died demonstrating their loyalty; of those who did not, the most prominent are:

Hector Dauntinghorn
(human male, Ftr11, LN)
The head of his house and veteran naval officer in the service of Cormyr, this greying patriarch was shocked by the revealed ruthlessness of Filfaeril and Tanalasta in the Council of Iron (see *Death of the Dragon*), as well as the battle-skills of Alusair and he was shocked into awe and almost worship of the Obarskyr women. This is the greatest realm in all Toril, and these are royals he's proud to serve. He'll give his life for them without hesitation.

Roland Emmarask
(human male, Wiz6/Ftr6, LN)
Head of the Emmarask family, Roland is known to be a thoughtful student of Cormyrian history, especially of disputes among merchants and nobles. He always takes "the long view," trying to see what's best for the realm, and telling either his cousin Alaphondar (the Royal Sage) or the Dowager Queen his opinions and his learning. His candor is valued, his loyalty confirmed many times over, and his collection of maps unsurpassed—even in the Palace.

Idamoar Hardcastle
(human male, Ftr12, LG)
Idamoar is the head of his house and a balding but still vigorous man. His sons Guldrin and Rathtar died bravely in the fighting. After returning to Suzail, with her own father and sister still unburied, Alusair personally took the news of his sons to Idamoar. The moment he saw her at his gates in her blood-drenched armor, tears streaming down her face, he knew why she'd come. Yet he felt so honored by the way she told him the fates of his sons, and the thanks she gave, that she somehow lit a lamp in the darkest day of his life. She's met with Idamoar several times since, taken him drinking with young nobles and made him laugh, and all but bullied him into fathering more children in his twilight years. He reckons he owes the Steel Regent his life back and will spend it for her if he must.

Purple Policies

In the fledgling days of the Regency, Cormyr has rebuffed envoys from Sembia and Westgate with stiff requests to "allow us time to order the realm once more without your pressing requests to spend coins among us that come with strings firmly attached to them." Increased trade is welcomed, but an increased Sembian or Westhavian presence (warehouses, businesses, agents, and property purchases) is not. Alusair has signaled that this might change in the future, but such changes will be at her own pleasure—which never flourishes under duress.

In contrast, merchants from the Dales have been openly welcomed and encouraged to settle, found new businesses or wayposts of their established concerns, and offers of Cormyrian armed escorts for caravans have been made.

At least one Zhent agent has demanded the same treatment and been coldly refused, but representatives from Hillsfar and Elversult have been politely encouraged into negotiations on the same topics—dealings that despite attractive offers from Cormyr seem to have stalled in endless meetings.

When Sembia reacted angrily to being treated less favorably by Cormyr than these more distant places, the Steel Regent coolly requested the immediate payment of outstanding loans and debts in the matter of the roadworks near Daerlun. She also demanded the salvage of the Sembian caravels Jhalavanther's Luck and Lady Rubytresses, which Cormyrian navy vessels towed to Marsember after they were abandoned in the Neck, sunk to the waterline and endangering other shipping.

Malanker Gadroun, Lord Factor of Westward (the western border of Sembia) has protested against these demands personally to the Steel Regent. She then promised to sheathe his own ceremonial sword up his backside if he ever spoke so haughtily to her or any other Cormyrian again.

When his report brought a stiff warning from Ordulin as to "how greatly unfortunate further regrettable incidents would be to the financial future of Cormyr," the Steel Regent sent back this blunt message: "While Sembia concerns itself with coins, we of Cormyr worry about food, lives, and having our swords ready. With our larders bare, the orcs and goblins will look east to Sembia and see a land that hasn't yet enjoyed its share of 'regrettable incidents.' The Crown of Cormyr fondly hopes that the good merchants of Sembia, when next counting their coins, find some wisdom lying on the table—and for once, pause long enough from their money-grubbing to pick it up."

Alusair is determined to retake Arabel before the next snows fly, and then scour both the King's Forest and the Hullack Forest of all orcs, goblins, brigands, and monsters. If holding Cormyr secure means building a line of fortresses along the edge of the Stonelands, that's what she'll do.

At the same time, although Cormyr officially welcomes neither the Harpers nor any other independent organizations, Alusair wants an unofficial agency of the Crown to spy on the doings of exiled Cormyrian nobles and other known foes of the realm in Sembia and Westgate. She wants the agency independent of the War Wizards, though, and doesn't quite know how to do that—or if she can trust the agency to serve only her if she asks Glarasteer Rhauligan to establish it.

Alusair doesn't anticipate being left alone to pursue such ends, however; she expects Faerûn to soon hand her too many crises to handle. Zhent and Dragon Cult ambitions, Westhavian plots and schemes, and rebel doings in Marsember are some of her primary concerns, for example. Then there's the matter of royal pretenders...

Pretenders

It's common knowledge in Cormyr that Azoun, and many of his ancestors before him, have had a way with the ladies, and that bastard offspring of royal blood dwell in many a noble house (and commoner's hut) all across Cormyr.

Any or all of the sons among these might well challenge for the crown if the realm is weak or imperiled at some later time; speculators would do well to remember such names as Beliard Cormaeril, the brothers Dauntryn and Delce Dauntinghorn, Brace Skatterhawk, and Ondryn Thundersword—among many, many others.

Should any such shadow-kin of the Obarskyrs move to take the throne, others of similar standing are sure to hotly contest their right to rule—and Cormyr could well experience a bloody civil war. The stability and longevity of the Obarskyr rule have thus far made the strength and prosperity of their realm, and if that fails, Cormyr could rapidly become an array of tiny, warring "vestpocket" baronies like the Border Kingdoms on the Lake of Steam.

Azoun's philandering was so energetic that when he married Filfaeril on Eleint 2, 1329, he was compelled to officially renounce his favorite pastime. Though the proclamation was no more specific, it was openly identified by one indelicate noble as "wenching his way through the nobility of Cormyr." When Azoun came to the throne in 1336 DR, Vangerdahast ceremonially reaffirmed the King's commitment to be faithful to his Queen and the needs of the Throne.

Unfortunately for Cormyr, the dead King's many unofficial offspring have made no such commitment—and it's likely, in the years to come, that one or more of them might see their rightful place as on the Dragon Throne and actually do something about it.

As the long-ago Cormyrian bard Londlas of Immersea sang:

"No backwater realm of trees this be,
Most favored Cormyr, dear I love thee,
For as I sit under my favorite tree, Every peril of Faerûn comes to visit me."

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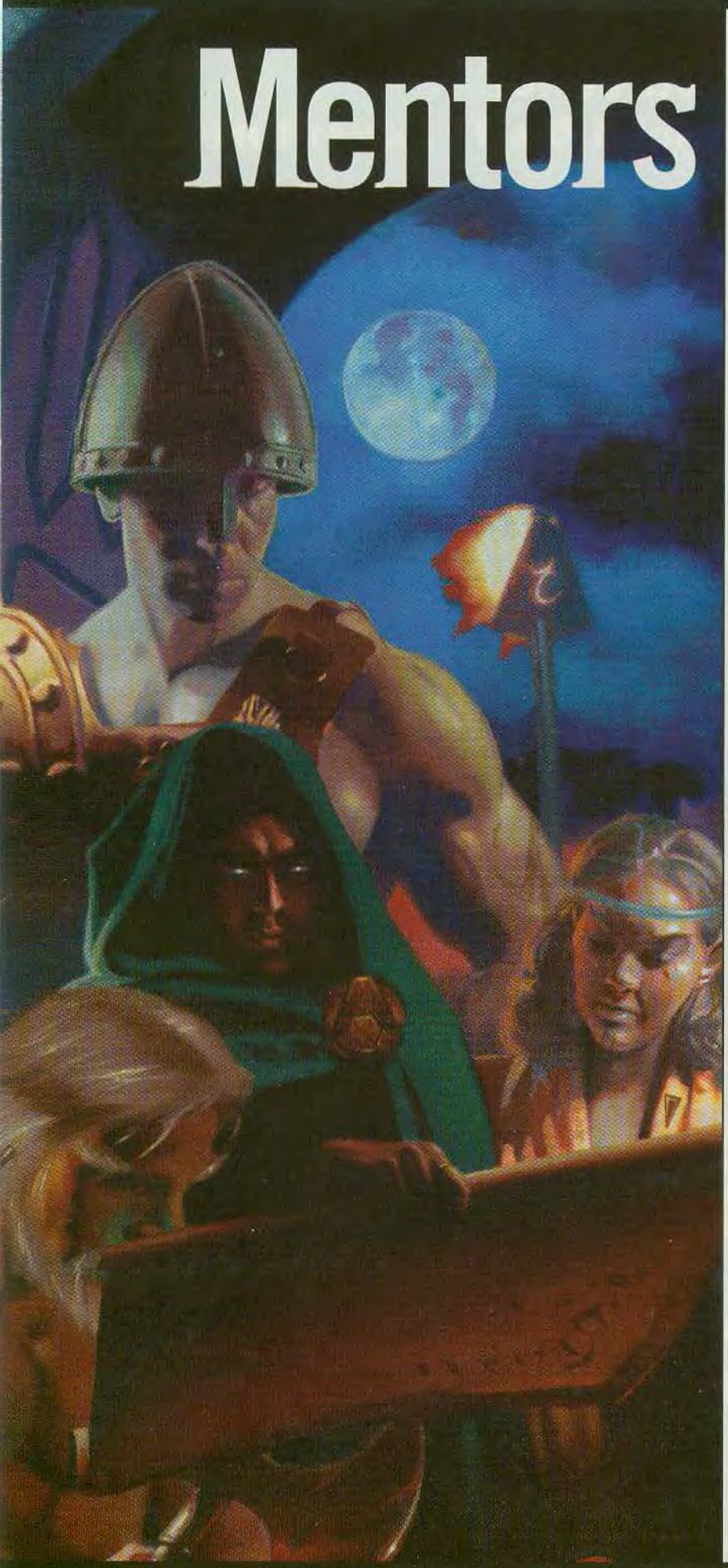
DMDA00

Mentors

Give your PCs a little guidance

by David Chunn
illustrated by Dennis Calero



Mentors such as Merlin, Obi-wan Kenobi, and Gandalf have trained, rescued, and equipped the greatest heroes of myth. They are a staple of heroic fiction, and therefore roleplaying adventures. Often, they are the heroes of the previous generation counseling the new.

Using mentors in your campaign could provide new plot twists, add character interaction to skill-level training, or boost a lagging storyline by giving PCs a mission.

To effectively use a mentor, you must first understand his role. The mentor is a channel through which PCs gain access to the wisdom, encouragement, or tools necessary to complete their quests. Second, you must define the mentor according to the needs and personalities of the PCs.

Group and Personal Mentors

You'll need at least one major NPC mentor during a campaign, and he should be a group mentor capable of uniting and motivating all of the PCs toward a common goal.

You'll also need minor NPC mentors to add depth and complexity to your story. Some might apply to only one PC, others to the whole group, but when should you use each type?

Use a personal mentor if a PC requires specific, individual training unlike that needed by anyone else. A PC can receive individual missions from a personal mentor. This is often the case with clerics, paladins, and knights.

Also, players might want a personal mentor to add depth to their characters' backgrounds, especially if a character comes from an exotic culture. For example, a shaman mentor might give a tribal warrior PC warnings from the land of dreams.

Use a group mentor if the PCs have trouble staying together whether because of different motivations or enmity. Usually, the major NPC mentor fulfills this role. However, he might not always be available.

If the PCs hit a tough spot and need fresh encouragement or a new mission, a minor group mentor can step in and get things moving again. Finally, if all (or a large portion) of the PCs have similar training needs, you can save time by using one teacher for everyone.

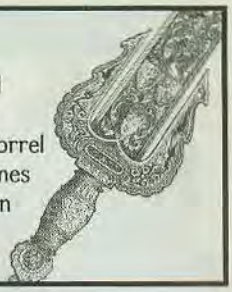
Caveat: Intrusive Mentors

Sometimes, DMs use mentors who adventure alongside the PCs. If this NPC often saves the day and steals the spotlight, players grow bored. If you're doing this, you've abandoned your role as storyteller in favor of playing a powerful character, one in which you have a vested interest. Take a break from DMing and play in someone else's campaign.

Analyze the mentors you're using. Don't drop a Gandalf into your campaign when a typical scholar could do the job. Of course, powerful mentors can be used well if, like Gandalf, they're never around when the PCs think they need them. Besides, Gandalf-types have other responsibilities. Send them off on missions of their own, or give them other important story tasks.

In *Star Wars*, Obi-wan deactivates the Death Star's tractor beam and sacrifices himself to stall Darth Vader. Both actions are essential plot tasks. At the same time, Luke barely survives other meaningful and difficult challenges. This sort of structure maintains the mentor's importance to the campaign world by allowing him to use his full abilities without spoiling the players' fun.

Adventure Hook: The Weapon Companion



One of the PCs finds an ancient, sentient broadsword named Forrel, who reveals himself after he sees the PC perform a heroic deed. In addition to allowing the use of his powers, Forrel offers to train the PC in combat and military tactics. Sometimes he gives tactical advice during the battle (at those times when you want to warn them before they screw up big time).

Adventure Hook: Rival Mentors

Two of the PCs' mentors, Hogart the Brave and Magus Tibbel, are rivals. Besides bickering as to which is stronger, magic or the warrior's skill, they place small bets on their students' quests, and sometimes they exert strong pressure on the PCs to outdo their rivals. Make sure their rivalry never grows so intense that it splinters the group. *Friendly* competition keeps things interesting and provide a few moments of humor.

Alternately, the two mentors could sponsor different adventurer groups. In this case, the competition between the PCs and another group could grow fierce, perhaps deadly.

Mentor Gifts and Tests

In many stories, a mentor grants the hero magical gifts in addition to advice and training. These items should have a story specific use, along with good limitations. Most such gifts are low-powered but useful—healing potions, minor scrolls, luck talismans, and so on.

The proper use of magical gifts is often part of a hero's ongoing testing. The noble hero uses a magic gift only for honorable purposes. A mentor-given item might stop functioning or disappear when used for the wrong reasons.

Keep in mind that the value of an item is subjective. A knight might be ecstatic to receive a magic longsword, while a peasant-hero would be happy to get a high quality spear. The peasant's test might be to answer a riddle, while the knight might have to fight a giant.

MENTORS IN YOUR CAMPAIGN COULD PROVIDE NEW PLOT TWISTS OR BOOST A LAGGING STORYLINE BY GIVING PCS A MISSION.

A powerful gift should be granted only after a PC proves himself worthy through a difficult, lengthy, and often deadly test. For instance, a shaman leads the PCs on a long, dangerous vision quest through the dream-world to recover artifacts that will increase their abilities. However, to get those objects, each PC must face a powerful guardian who represents his or her worst nightmare.

Adventure Hook: Don't Mind My Ambition

Tagano, the local weapons-master, is always willing to take on students. Though Tagano has good intentions, he also has strong political ambitions that will one day conflict with the PCs' ideals or pit him or his other students against the PCs' allies. Tagano is willing to overlook these differences, but can the PCs?

Seven Common Mentor Types

This mentor list is not exhaustive, and the different types could be blended to construct new types. Each type will be altered by the distinct personality and character of the mentor you create.

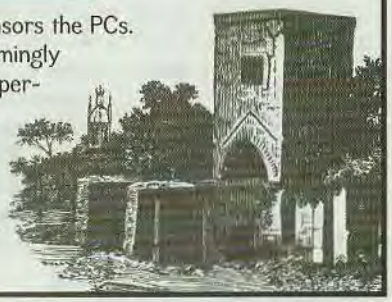
1. Helper
2. Squad Leader
3. Teacher
4. Sponsor
5. Retired Hero
6. Shadow

Adventure Hook: Go Away, I'm Retired

Teppy Grawl, an old explorer, is the only person to have crossed the Jungle of Plagues—a place to which the PCs must adventure. The problem is that Teppy vowed never to talk about exploration again after accidentally causing a rock slide that killed two of her companions. If the PCs want to succeed, they must convince the grief-stricken Teppy to divulge her secrets, if not personally guide them through the jungle. Neither is going to be easy.

Adventure Hook: Dark & Mysterious

A person known only as the Dark Mask sponsors the PCs. She demands little except the occasional seemingly inconsequential mission such as delivering a personal letter. Yet, she equips and trains them, even gives them a small base of operations. She'll work to earn their trust, and one day she'll reveal her identity and motives. Who she is and whether she's been up to good or evil is up to you.



Helper

The PCs have crossed the Wastes of Doom. They're starving, wounded, and lost. Luckily, they encounter Basala the hedge witch, who heals them. When she finds out they're on a quest to kill Karoom the Corrupt, who murdered her brother, she gladly gives them healing potions, directions to his keep, and advice on how to defeat him.

A mentor like Basala, who might appear once or twice in a campaign, is a Helper. Put simply, this common mentor type is a plot device that appears when the PCs need specific help—perhaps a small gift or information to get to the adventure's next stage.

Always have an extra Helper ready in case something goes wrong—the PCs get lost, nearly all of them die, they can't solve a problem, and so forth. However, be sure to devise a plausible reason for the Helper to show up.

The Helper doesn't fix the PCs' problems herself. Instead, she gives them a fresh perspective or a better opportunity to do it themselves. For example: Some inexperienced PCs nearly died fighting trolls. A Helper heals them, advises them to use fire, and even sells them some flasks of oil. Now the PCs have a better chance, but they still have to do the dirty work themselves.

A SINISTER SHADOW MIGHT SEND PCS ON QUESTS THAT SEEM INNOCENT BUT ACTUALLY FURTHER THE CAUSES OF EVIL.

Squad Leader

Because of their wisdom and skill, Squad Leaders can easily steal glory from the PCs. Therefore, be cautious in their creation and in playing them. All of the advice here applies to any mentor companion who travels with the PCs, regardless of whether he's in charge.

Try to find creative ways to limit the Squad Leader's raw power. An older adventurer might have more skill knowledge, but due to age he's starting to slow down and lose power.

In a military-style campaign, make the Squad Leader one or two levels better than the PCs, then progress him at a similar rate. This way he remains helpful and slightly superior, yet he's never capable of outshining them by any great means. At some point, the PCs should surpass or equal him in ability.

Even the Squad Leader's wisdom can be tricky to handle. The PCs need to solve their own problems and not become dependent on the mentor's opinions and ideas. One way to handle this is to make the mentor wise but not necessarily smart, perhaps even a bit dull. This way, he makes good but slow decisions and doesn't come up with all the ideas. But don't overdo it. PCs tend to get tired of people perceived as idiots, especially ones who are in charge.

Teacher

The Teacher is a standard advisor or instructor who hangs around the PCs' home base waiting to train them when their skill-level increases. This type is best used for individual PCs who need specialized training.

Some Teachers take an active interest in the PCs' actions and train them to accomplish a specific task—take over as sharif, liberate the nation, become a Jedi and defeat the Empire, and so on. Others trust the PCs' integrity and have no vested interest or input as to what the PCs do. Unless the PC is apprenticed to his mentor, the Teacher has her own agendas and other students.

A Teacher who strictly advises could be a PC's mother, a wise priest, or an old bard who knows many legends. Such mentors work well because they possess a lot of wisdom about life but know little if anything about solving puzzles or fighting dragons.

Adventure Hook: The "Honest" Bureaucrat

Lord Crabot, the PCs' Sponsor Mentor, appears honest, but he's actually a corrupt bureaucrat. He manipulates the information he gives the PCs, making his enemies seem guilty of horrible crimes, though they've done nothing wrong. The PCs are paid to seize, harass, or kill these enemies. They think they're doing a good deed until they find out the truth.

Sponsor

The Sponsor is the best archetype to use early in a campaign because he can give missions to start the ball rolling as well as provide background information to set up future events and ease the players into the campaign world.

Common Sponsors are rich merchants, nobles, priests, and scholars—people who have the resources to equip the PCs and provide for their training. But don't make the Sponsor too generous, otherwise the PCs will become over-equipped and complacent.

The best Sponsors have limitations to their giving. An exiled prince won't be able to reward the PCs substantially until he retakes the throne. Remember, most people don't have powerful artifacts and magic items. Those who do keep them to themselves.

The agenda of an important Sponsor, like an exiled prince seeking to retake his throne, can often become the central quest of the campaign.

Retired Hero

This old hero, whether a soldier, thief, or crime-fighter, has seen it all but can't or doesn't adventure anymore. Maybe she lost heart, grew too old, or was critically injured.

If physically possible, however, a Retired Hero might adventure again if she's needed to save the world or country. Such old heroes often have a climactic death in which they ensure the survival and success of younger heroes, as with Obi-wan Kenobi sacrificing himself to allow Luke and the others to escape the Death Star.

Any Teacher, Sponsor, or Helper could be a retired hero, but as a recurring NPC, the Retired Hero type represents someone who wants little to do with the old adventuring life. He's likely to be little more than a friend, giving advice and encouragement to the PCs.

Shadow

Not all mentors are conspicuously good guys. These mentors have secret, possibly sinister agendas. An NPC fulfilling the role of any other mentor type can also be a Shadow.

A sinister Shadow might send PCs on quests that seem innocent but actually further the causes of evil. Ultimately, the PCs' loyalties are strained when they end up in conflict with the Shadow. After the truth is revealed, mentor gifts might become curses, and other adventurers might distrust the PCs.

Shadows can sometimes be redeemed by the heroism of their students. The PCs might grow close to their mentor, and when they discover his evil nature, they might want to turn him because they're determined he's good inside. Whether this works is up to you, but PCs should be rewarded for trying such valiant actions.

A popular Shadow, used as a Sponsor, is the mysterious benefactor. This mentor keeps his identity secret while financially supporting the PCs and providing them with missions.

Don't use the Shadow too often as a major NPC, because players will begin to unfairly distrust every mentor you introduce. D

Adventure Hook: Sliding Toward the Dark Side

When the campaign began, the PCs' Sponsor, Brogfel the High Priest of Tyr, was proud, honest, and noble. However, after Tyr refused to heal his dying sister, Brogfel became despondent then maniacal. He has turned to evil, systematically destroying the religion he helped build. The PCs must defeat him or find a way to get him back under control.

Mentor Tests

SEEK & RETRIEVE

The mentor tells the PCs the location of Kabbat's Grimoire, which contains spells they need to defeat an upcoming enemy. To recover it, the PCs have to defeat the book's ancient and powerful guardians.

OLYMPIC TRIAL

The mentor requires the PCs to swim across the raging Gorl River, scale Mount Olympia, and return in three days with a marker from the summit. Such trials are designed to test knowledge and willpower as much as physical capability.

RIDDLE ME THIS

The PCs must answer a riddle to receive help. The best riddles not only test the PCs' wisdom but also provide foreshadowing or personal advice. Some riddles don't have set answers but can be solved multiple ways with any intelligent or compassionate response being the correct answer.

DEMONSTRATE YOUR SKILL

The PCs' would-be mentor, the bronze dragon Tabboth, requires them to prove their worth in combat against him. This gives inexperienced PCs a chance to fight one of the big guys and see how they measure up without the risk of dying. Remember, they don't have to know it's a test at first.

101 Evil Schemes

101 (Mostly) Foolproof Plots for Villains

by E.W. Morton

The measure of a villain is his motive. With that in mind, here are dozens of villainous schemes for your consideration. Use them as story ideas or simply fantastic rumors. Use them as hooks and background. Use them alone, or strung together. But however you would use them, just remember that it's the scheme that makes the villain.

1

A killer stalks the streets. The twist? The killer is a paladin who has been convinced by an **imposter cleric** that the murders will stop the results of a dire prophecy. The imposter knows that this murder spree will fulfill the dark prophecy, not prevent it.

2

A foreign **agent hires an evil dragon** to prey on local livestock. The agent hopes that local heroes will slay the dragon and that its sire, a great wyrm of legendary power, will descend in rage upon the land.

3

A **madman hires the PCs** to bring him a *sphere of annihilation*. He has been collecting such items for years and plans on conjoining enough of them to rip apart the fabric of the universe. The madman, an expert at controlling the spheres, plans to destroy the heroes using the sphere they bring him.

4

A **wizard seeks spell components** that he plans to use to transport his city to the Upper Planes, where it will forever exist in peace. A local warlord, whose armies will no longer face opposition once the wizard's city is gone, secretly inspired this idea.

5

A local wizard has established an academy and is hiring adventurers to **uncover lost tomes** for its library. Unknown to all, the academy is the pet project of a mind flayer clan that hopes to attract learned (and tasty) minds.

6

A vampire, tired of undeath, uses magic to **switch bodies with a living woman.** The victim of this scheme, now undead and consumed with unimaginable hunger, is on a ravenous murder spree, regretting her actions but unable to help herself. When confronted, she begs to be returned to her own body.

7

A nemesis of the PCs has devised a nasty strategy: He **leads several carrion crawlers** into the PCs' camp. The paralyzing carrion crawlers soften up the PCs for the main attack.

8

A frost wizard decides that all of society's problems can be blamed on emotions. He begins **replacing people** in his homeland with *simulacra*, as per the spell.

9

A **tanar'ri ventures into a high technology universe** to acquire a nuclear weapon. Such technological devices do not work outside of their home plane, but this is not yet known. The tanar'ri must be stopped, either on its way back to the Abyss or in the high-tech universe itself.

10

An **advisor to the king uses illusions** to convince the sovereign that his lost love is secretly being held captive by an ally. The advisor hopes to take the throne from the "mad king" after he starts a war and alienates his supporters.

11

A **woman seeks adventurers to confront an ancient evil.** What she doesn't say is that the evil will be freed when trespassers enter its lair. The woman is a foreign agent who wants this misfortune to befall the land.

12

The tarrasque has been devastating the countryside, but a planewalking "tarrasque hunter" has recently **opened a vast gate** with which to whisk the creature away. All the traveler needs are a few volunteers to lure the tarrasque into the portal. The mad "tarrasque hunter" is actually trying to destroy his home world, as the tarrasque will be deposited there.

13

A **conniving rogue** has devised a means by which to bring down the PCs. With the help of a wizard, he crafts a set of cursed items, each of which is a replica

of an object carried by one of the PCs. One by one, he replaces each of the PCs' valuable items with its cursed replica.

Elves are long-lived but not immortal. One decides that she will become the latter. She founds a cult in her name and demands unswerving loyalty from her followers, even though she knows that this results in their execution for heresy. She hopes that this sacrifice in her name will further her quest for immortality.

A lich is weary of meddling in the affairs of the mortal world and wants to die. He doesn't want anyone to take his accumulated treasures without effort, so he threatens a nearby city with destruction unless some adventurers hazard the dangers of his lair and destroy him.

A flock of cloakers has made an alliance with a sadistic merchant, who now "sells" the cloakers to unsuspecting buyers, as the monsters are almost indistinguishable from fine cloaks. Together, the merchant and the cloakers hope to seize control of the immediate area.

A madman, obsessed with studying the psychology behind fear, has **created a golem** to spread panic. The madman follows his evil creation, observing as it terrorizes the local peasantry.

A mangy **clan of gnolls** resides in the city sewers and works to cave in these underground pipelines. If they are not stopped soon, the damage to the city's foundations will be too great, and the population above the surface will be forced to flee the resulting ruin.

Upstanding members of the community, all of whom claim to be innocent, appear to have committed all manner of petty crimes. The crime spree is actually the result of a manipulative kobold that has become an "imaginary friend" to several children, whom it is using as larcenous pawns.

A **wizard collects monsters** and keeps them in a menagerie. She hires powerful adventurers to collect them. Little do they know that she plans to use them to attack a college of magic that banned her for her evil experiments.

An **orc general** has found an interesting use for a clan of giants. He has the giants toss orcs with *feather fall* cast on them over the walls of each city his horde encounters. These orcs make their way to the city gates and open them before the startled defenders can react.

A **tyrant fears** that the people will revolt if not taught that his harsh ways are necessary. He tricks two powerful guilds into a vicious conflict and uses it to justify his ruthless policies.

A clever **band of gargoyles** has chosen as its home a city in which ranged weapons are forbidden and statuary is commonplace. They can hide amid the inanimate gargoyles decorating the rooftops and can fly unchallenged. Attempts at driving them away have yet to succeed.

A **mercenary captain** looking for employment poses as a highwayman. His mercenary company is hired and intentionally fails to capture the highwayman. When others are asked to join in the hunt, the mercenaries decide to frame the newcomers for the robberies.

Of late, winters have been especially harsh. A **conjurer tries to fix the problem** by traveling to the Underdark and opening vortices to the Elemental Plane of Fire. His plan will flood many miles of inhabited caverns with magma, destroying several communities to warm his own.

A bored god of strife has provoked a heated argument between several goddesses, persuading them to pick a mortal arbiter. Regardless of this arbiter's decisions, he is likely to upset at least one of the goddesses, who will bring misfortune upon him and his companions.

A **necromancer has been digging** tunnels between his manor and the city graveyard to steal corpses. When a grave digger discovers the tunnels, the mayor calls for help with catching the necromancer and his zombie minions.

An **ancient lich** has uncovered the hiding place of a hibernating vampire. To rid himself of this potential rival, the lich poses as the vampire and preys on the local populace. When confronted, the lich flees into the vampire's crypt then teleports away, leaving the PCs to finish off his enemy.

Magic items are all but priceless. A **fledgling wizard** realized this and has created several items that look magical using *Nystul's magic aura*. He has put these items up for sale, claiming that they're actual magic items.

A **priest of an evil sea god**, posing as a navigator, leads a passenger vessel into kraken territory, where he plans to sacrifice the ship and its passengers to a minion of his wicked patron.

A messenger from the Upper Planes has become as evil as the fiends he fights. The celestial hires the PCs to battle a fiend he is hunting, but he intends on helping the fiend defeat them. He believes that he can better rally support for his cause if the PCs become martyrs.

32

The **leviathan** is a creature of good, ever fighting the evils of the sea. Sahaugin send agents to an island nation with fabricated stories about the evils of the leviathan, stories supported by "leviathan attacks" that are actually sahaugin raids for which the leviathan has been framed.

33

With **the help of a cloud giant clan**, a wizard has discovered a spell that can destroy magic cloud islands. The wizard has already tested his spell on the isle of the cloud giants, sending most of the clan plummeting to their deaths. He now plans on dispelling a cloud island inhabited by a silver dragon to steal the dragon's treasure.

34

Rakshasas have conquered an entire city with one swift attack and then masked it with powerful magic to preserve an illusion of of normality. Rumor of the attack is rampant but no one is sure which city the rakshasas now control.

35

An old man claims to have **escaped the slave pits** of a powerful warlord. He has the layout of the warlord's fortress memorized and can lead interested parties straight to the throne room. In reality, the old man is the warlord himself, looking to fake his own death so he can work from the shadows.

36

The **monstrous yuan-ti** hope to smuggle their ruler out of their lair in a particular city. They infest the market with deadly serpents, creating a diversion. As the citizens panic, the serpentine ruler of the yuan-ti is on the move.

37

An **aging warrior-king wishes to die** in battle and so must start a war. He gives his crown to some of his men and hires a band of adventurers to reclaim the item, which the king tells them has been stolen. When the adventurers acquire the crown, the king accuses them of having been hired by a neighboring kingdom to steal it, thus justifying a declaration of war.

38

A **vigilante has hounded** the guildmaster of a local thieves' guild for years. To stop this, the guildmaster assassinates several citizens of questionable but forgivable morals and frames the vigilante. People begin to fear that their protector has finished with thieves and moved on to those who commit the smallest of offenses. The citizens now seek someone to hunt down the vigilante.

39

In a city where the **ownership of quality pets is a status symbol**, an evil transmuter has polymorphed his many doppelganger minions into fine animals and sold them to the nobility. Once each noble owns one of these false pets, the doppelgangers, which can counteract *polymorph* spells on a whim, will replace the entire upper class.

40

To avoid being caught, a **vampire develops a spell** that gives people a strong aversion to garlic, sunlight, running water, and mirrors. Whenever a new hunt for the vampire begins, the creature casts the spell on someone else, leading hunters to believe that the spell's victim is the vampire being hunted. Currently, the vampire plans on making a "troublesome" paladin or priest this unique spell's next target.

41

A wizard has been **dominating powerful individuals** to use as pawns with a unique variant of the *dominate person* spell that not only controls the victim but also causes that person to believe that the source of the spell is someone of the wizard's choosing. Using this special spell, the evil wizard frames a powerful, good-aligned rival.

42

A **fiend has created a spell** that allows recipients to become native to the Upper Planes, but it must sacrifice many celestial beings to cast it. The fiend has gathered a small army of its kind and wants to enchant them, allowing them to operate freely on the Upper Planes. All the fiend must do is lure some celestials into a trap it has set using hired mortals as pawns.

43

A local human king, **tired of elves** harassing his nation's loggers, hires a band of adventurers to deliver a message of peace to the elven court. Unknown to the messengers, the scroll carrying this message has been coated with a poison that afflicts only elves. The king hopes to provoke the elves into open warfare.

44

Everyone thinks about vampires, but no one ever remembers the insidious lamia. One particular **lamia is feeding** off the local population and throwing off investigators by spreading rumors suggesting the presence of a vampire.

45

A **coven of hags** shares a friendly wager. They hope to humiliate an adventuring party by having one of the adventurers unintentionally kill another. The first among the hags to successfully pull off this scheme wins the bet.

46

A **crafty rogue** has been pursuing an uninterested maiden for some time. When a dragon attacks the countryside, the rogue sees his chance. He convinces the local villagers that they must sacrifice the object of his attention to the dragon. He plans to kidnap the girl when she is left for sacrifice. Unfortunately for all, the dragon hears that a maiden is being offered and plans to show up for dinner.

47

A **band of lizardfolk** has decided to divert a river and flood a city, which they will then claim as their own. Fortunately, a traveler has glimpsed their riverside excavations and asked adventurers to investigate.

48

A **famous artist**, recently snubbed by the nobility, takes dormant yellow mold and uses it to color the yellow portions of the paintings of his rival just before a gala exhibition at a noble's mansion. The people at the exhibition notice nothing amiss except for a strange odor, but a day later they all feel the mold's deadly effect.

49

Local **hobgoblin bands** have enlisted a human traitor as a spy. The spy has concocted special ink that is visible only to darkvision, and he has been writing messages to the hobgoblins on the sides of wagons leaving his home city.

50

An **orc general** is planning on attacking a certain city. In the sewers beneath this city, the orc has raised a large herd of rust monsters. Unless they are discovered and destroyed, they will be unleashed upon the city armory, crippling the city's militia even as the orcs move to attack.

51

In a land **plagued by the walking dead**, an undead hunting wizard offers training in return for assistance. Unknown to the wizard, the idea to train others in his profession was secretly suggested by a lich, who needs pawns with which to battle an undead rival.

52

One of the nobility discovers that the king is **sending a peace offering** to one-time enemies and convinces the people that their king has betrayed them. The citizens support the nobility in a political coup unless the truth is revealed.

53

A **greedy water elemental** has opened a vortex in the middle of the ocean and is intent upon draining the seas back into the elemental plane from which they came. To stop the elemental from turning the world into a desert, the creature must be offered something that it would value more than the contents of every ocean in the world.

54

A **powerful werewolf** has learned a magical rite that transforms infected lycanthropes into true lycanthropes. He is now offering true lycanthropy to any who will swear allegiance to him, and he is slowly turning local thugs and once-vanquished villains into formidable foes.

55

To monopolize a given trade route, a **ruthless conglomerate of merchants** enlists the aid of several goblinoid tribes to attack rival caravans.

56

A **planar explorer bottles the waters** from the River Styx and somehow preserves their mystical, amnesia-causing properties. He returns home to wreak vengeance upon his enemies by stealing their memories.

57

A con man is selling **false treasure maps**. To insure that his scheme remains uncovered, each of the man's maps leads explorers to the lair of a deadly beast, where they will presumably meet their doom.

58

The **high priest of a destructive god** is granted an *earthquake* spell and now heads toward a city at the foot of a dormant volcano. If not intercepted, the priest casts *earthquake* upon the mountain and triggers a violent eruption.

59

An **efreeti has created a band** of almost unstoppable minions by granting a clan of trolls their wish to have immunity to fire. The trolls now stalk the land with impunity, ruling in the name of their efreeti ally.

60

An army of **goblins laying siege** to a village has devised a wicked tactic. They begin catapulting stone jars into the city, where the jars shatter and unleash their lethal contents: green slime!

61

The king's remote summer estate has become **infested with ghosts**, much to the monarch's chagrin. In reality, the so-called ghosts are illusions, created by a spellcasting gnome squatter who wishes to keep the royal residence to himself.

62

An evil priest **poses as a member** of a good-aligned church to gain political power. In return for an annual human sacrifice, the evil priest's patron protects him from detection by members of the church. To fulfill this year's sacrifice, the priest secretly builds a dungeon to be used in an ambush and asks adventurers to investigate.

63

An aging sage has **discovered the lair of a lich** and agrees to lead the PCs there to confront the creature. The sage doesn't actually want the heroes to slay it for he hopes that the lich will somehow help him cheat death. If necessary the sage will turn on the PCs to save the zombie lord from destruction.

64

A bored god of strife decides to use a **social outcast as entertainment**. He grants the man divine power, no strings attached. Now, the mortal-turned-avatar capriciously torments the society that cast him out. The only hope of ending his reign of terror is for someone to convince him to willingly give up the divine gift he has received.

65

The sultan of the efreet decides to flex his muscles by **brightening the flames of the sun** and turning the world into an arid desert. To prevent this, someone must travel to the City of Brass and convince the sultan that his malicious display of power isn't necessary.

66

A seafaring merchant has **hoarded grain**. He wants to sell it at the highest

price he can. To this end, he has secretly infested his vessel with vermin from a distant continent. These vermin will cause terrible crop blights in his homeland unless someone keeps them from being brought ashore.

67

A drow learns that a surface elf has been **collecting cursed items** and storing them in an anti-magic vault. Looking to wreak havoc, the drow slays the elven collector and distributes the cursed items far and wide.

68

An **island temple** has been declared taboo; should any mortal set foot within it, terrible plagues will ravage the land. A man whose wife died of an illness wants everyone to share his misery. He seeks to find and enter the temple.

69

A treaty with the local elves prohibits human travelers from **harming any vegetation** in the surrounding woods. An evil clan of minotaurs is using this to their advantage and has been planting brambles for years, turning the wood into a giant hedge maze.

70

A manipulative temptress has decided that the **PCs would make nice pawns.** To make them hers, she has asked a sly rogue to slip *potions of love* into each of their drinks just before she encounters them.

71

A young cleric has been given the honor of **conducting a special holiday ritual.** Her lazy brother, long jealous of her success in life, has been interfering with the preparations for the ritual, trying to make her look incompetent. The clergy fears that evil spirits are behind the mishaps.

72

A **glabrezu looks to interfere** with the ritual that keeps it at bay, but it can't enter the town where the ritual is being held. It has enlisted the aid of a foolish mortal, whom it plans to have take the blame for any interference it's inspired.

73

A clockmaker building a clock tower for the city requests the PCs' help to **rid his tower of gremlins.** In truth there are no gremlins. The clockmaker was paid to assassinate the PCs and he equipped the clock tower with deadly traps.

74

A medusa has decided to **build herself a sanctuary** constructed of petrified humanoids. Towards this end, she has enlisted the services of notorious kidnappers.

75

The PCs learn that an ancient lich has **tempted one of their spellcaster allies,** convincing the man to become a lich. To save their friend's soul, the PCs must prevent the ritual that will transform him into one of the undead.

76

A **vampire has gained control** of one of the PCs' former allies. She hopes that the PCs will attempt to save him, for she secretly desires to transform one of their number into a vampire.

77

One of the heroes' cohort has developed an eye for a particular PC. She goes to any length to **keep the PC out of danger,** even going so far as to undermine the PC's every action in the hopes of persuading him to retire from adventuring.

78

To **generate distrust among the PCs,** one of their long-time foes has kidnapped and later returned one of the party members. The abductee has no memories of his abduction but radiates moderate Enchantment magic. The villain has no real control over the abductee; he merely wishes it to look as if he does.

79

A **devious necromancer** has captured one of the PCs' cohorts, swapped his spirit with that of a doppelganger, and then returned him in the doppleganger's body but in his own form. The abductee is unaware that he is now a doppelganger, but the PCs might learn this fact and think their henchman is an imposter. When they find the doppelganger in their friend's body, they might assume the worst and believe him to be a real shapeshifter.

80

A villain, using a magical portal, has **traveled back in time.** Fearing that the villain will try to change the past, the PCs must use the same portal to go back after him. The villain does not actually dare interfere with history. His real goal is to keep the PCs out of the present so that his allies' present-day schemes go unchallenged.

81

To **discourage thieves,** a mighty wizard once cut a deal with a powerful, evil entity, insuring that any unauthorized persons entering his keep would be transported to a replica of the keep on the Lower Planes. The wizard has long since passed away and no warning remains about his extradimensional trap.

82

To prevent two kingdoms from allying against them, a band of goblins has been **making border raids** upon both nations, framing each kingdom for attacks upon the other. Anyone wanting to protect the alliance must venture to the goblins' warrens and uncover evidence of the creatures' trickery.

83

An evil wizard has set out on a venture **to the center of the world,** from which he plans to retrieve a powerful artifact. He will be stopped only if someone else ventures through the Underdark and beats him to the prize.

84

An **aboleth has decided to build** an outpost in a murky, aboveground lagoon. It has trapped the inhabitants of a fishing village at the bottom of the lagoon for use as slave labor.

85

To remain the best in the land, a breeder of prize chickens **steals his rivals' chicken eggs** and replaces them with cockatrice eggs. These eggs hatch, and the cockatrices run amok across the countryside.

86

A dragon has concocted a plan to **eliminate potential threats**. Using a *crystal ball*, the dragon uncovers the identities of local adventuring professionals and has its minions ambush these individuals before they become too experienced.

87

An archeologist **ventures into the deep desert**, where a living idol trapped beneath the sands is using most of its remaining power to demand the archeologist's assistance. The evil idol hopes that the ensorcelled archeologist will unearth it.

88

An infamous bard wants to **add to his legend**. He helps the PCs defeat a particular beast but then turns upon them so that he can claim to be the sole survivor of the glorious quest. Even if the bard fails to murder the adventurers, stories of his deeds will be spread simply for making the attempt.

89

An **evil treant** has decided to wage a war against civilization using animated trees as soldiers. The treant has attacked several hamlets. The survivors of these strikes have fled, believing the forest to be cursed.

90

A **baron hires adventurers** to eliminate a band of goblins that has been destroying his crops and digging up his fields. What the baron doesn't tell those in his employ is that the goblins are actually searching for their young, whom the baron has kidnapped to work as slaves in his mines. It is the location of these hidden mines that the goblins seek with their mysterious excavations.

91

Of late, the **waters of the bay are becoming murkier**, driving away wildlife and making life difficult for the fishermen. The source of the silt is a ruthless wizard, who is using his magic to pollute the bay. He hopes that this will force an elusive mermaid to surface for capture.

92

An **elf seeks the heart of an ancient wood**, where he claims he will study a small band of benign drow renegades. In truth, the man is a half-elf whose elven mother was slain by evil drow. He wants to test a poison on the renegade drow before risking his life to deliver the toxin into the water supply of their evil kin.

93

A conniving thief has **stolen a religious icon** and planted it in the house of a particular noble. He cares nothing about the icon but instead wants the noble to be executed so that no one remains to attest to the exact size of the noble's gem collection, from which the thief will pilfer a fair percentage.

94

A **bitter dwarven weaponsmith** has made it his mission to spread misery throughout the world. To this end, he sabotages every weapon he makes. Though all of his wares appear to be of the highest quality, each fails dramatically after several weeks of use.

95

A particular rogue was **raised to dislike wizards**, and he has found a way to do away with them. The man breeds bookworms, which he makes sure to unleash upon any tome or library he can reach using his roguish talents.

96

A **villain's follower has convinced** both the villain and his heroic rivals to travel through a magical portal. The henchman plans to destroy the portal, stranding his boss and his enemies so he can to take over his former master's criminal empire.

97

One of the PCs' **nemeses has reformed** and hopes to earn redemption by fighting evil at their side. Unfortunately, one of this individual's evil rivals sees an opportunity to destroy both the PCs and their newfound ally; this foe has recruited some of the reformed villain's disappointed minions to attack their former master and the characters.

98

Grimlocks, who are born blind, have **shrouded a human city** in a cloud of smoke generated by an unusually potent *eversmoking bottle*. The smoke doesn't reach indoors, but on the streets, where vision is completely obscured, the grimlocks reign supreme. The only way to free the city is to find and seal the *eversmoking bottle*.

99

A kraken with a taste for land-dwellers has developed a **potent magical talent** that allows it to open magical doorways connecting its lair to other watery locales. The sea monster has been using this magic to snatch victims through pools, wells, and even bathtubs.

100

The **city has fended off** several umber hulk attacks, but the monsters are learning. They have started working as sappers, destroying city structures from below. If the umber hulks are not stopped, the city will be undermined and collapse.

101

With the birth of his daughter sixteen years ago, an **evil game hunter** apparently gave up his wicked ways. He retired from hunting and reared his daughter to be a perfectly virtuous young woman. In truth, the hunter is using his daughter in a sixteen-year-old scheme. Once adventurers make the surrounding woodlands a safe place in which his daughter can stroll, he hopes that she will befriend the wood's elusive unicorn, bringing it into the open so that he can claim its horn as a trophy.

GNOME TRICKSTER

by Monte Cook · illustrated by D. Alexander Gregory

Forced to dwell among creatures larger and stronger than they, gnomes have often turned to their unique strengths to survive. The phrase "they might be big, but we're smart" is a common one among their kind, as is "if you can't beat them, trick them." The gnome trickster prestige class provides a model in which the "tricky little guy" archetype of the gnome is quantified with formidable game mechanics.

Gnome Trickster

The trickster is a gnome specializing in the use of deception and misdirection to get ahead. He can be playful and light-hearted, but he just as often uses his skills to fool his foes in deadly situations. A trickster employs the skills of both illusionists and rogues fused together in a uniquely gnomish amalgam.

Tricksters are most often rogues or wizards, but just about any gnome character—short of perhaps a paladin—has taken up the role of the trickster.

NPC tricksters are usually loners looking for fun, adventure, riches, or all of the above.

THE GNOME TRICKSTER — HIT DIE D6

Lvl	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	Misdirection
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	Slippery, illusion expertise
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	False charm
4	+3	+1	+4	+1	Size combat
5	+4	+1	+4	+1	Extended illusion
6	+5	+2	+5	+2	Repeated strike
7	+6	+2	+5	+2	Enlarge illusion
8	+6	+2	+6	+2	Bonus illusion
9	+7	+3	+6	+3	Quickened illusion
10	+8	+3	+7	+3	*Fade away*

Lvl: The level of the trickster.

Attack Bonus: The trickster's attack bonus, added to the character's normal attack bonus.

Fort. Save: The save bonus on Fortitude saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Ref. Save: The save bonus on Reflex saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Will Save: The save bonus on Will saving throws, added to the character's normal save bonus.

Special: Level-dependent class features.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a trickster, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Must be a gnome

Must be able to cast at least 1st-level arcane spells of the Illusion school

Hide skill ranks: 3

Pick Pocket ranks: 5

Bluff ranks: 7

Heroic feats: Expertise

CLASS SKILLS

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier

The trickster's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Balance (Dex)
Bluff (Cha)
Escape Artist (Dex)
Hide (Dex)
Innuendo (Wis)
Listen (Wis)
Move Silently (Dex)
Perform (Dex)
Pick Pockets (Dex)
Sense Motive (Wis)
Spot (Wis)
Tumble (Dex)

CLASS FEATURES

• **Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** The trickster is proficient with all simple weapons, but no type of armor or shield.

• **Misdirection:** Once per day, for every three levels of the trickster, the trickster can, as a free action, force one foe of greater than 2 Int within 10 feet to make a Will save with a DC of 10 + the trickster's class level. If the saving throw fails, that foe is treated as flat-footed until the foe's next action. This ability involves some sort of communication between the trickster and the target—a few words, a gesture, and so on. This is an extraordinary ability.

• **Slippery:** At 2nd level, gnome tricksters gain a +2 bonus to Escape Artist and Tumble checks. This is an extraordinary ability.

• **Illusion Expertise:** The Trickster can use his character level rather than his class level in regards to any level-based effects of Illusion spells (duration, range, and so on).

• **False Charm:** At 3rd level, the trickster gains a +2 bonus to his Charisma. This is an extraordinary ability.

• **Size Combat:** At 4th level, the trickster gains a +1 competence bonus to attack all creatures larger than Small size. This is an extraordinary ability.

• **Extended Illusion:** At 5th level, one of the Illusion spells the trickster can cast is forever treated as being extended, as per the feat Extend Spell, though with no modification in level. This is a supernatural ability.

• **Repeated Strike:** At 6th level, a trickster in combat can attack a foe he has already hit that round again, as a free action, once per round. The gnome uses the same attack bonus used in the attack that struck the foe. This is an extraordinary ability.

• **Enlarge Illusion:** At 7th level, one of the Illusion spells the trickster can cast is forever treated as being enlarged, as per the feat Enlarge Spell, though with no modification in level. This is a supernatural ability.

• **Bonus Illusion:** At 8th level, the trickster gains a bonus Illusion spell at each spell level known. This is a supernatural ability.

• **Quickened Illusion:** At 9th level, one of the Illusion spells the trickster can cast is forever treated as being quickened, as per the feat Quicken Spell, though with no modification in level. This is a supernatural ability.

• ***Fade Away:*** At 10th level, the trickster can use a *dimension door* as a spell-like ability once per day as a free action as if he were a sorcerer of his trickster class level.

The Royal Heralds

Her Majesty's Secret Servants

by Andy Collins • illustrated by Mike Vilardi

Jack Dav slipped quietly through the shadowy halls of the Grand Vizier's palace. His fingers had been twitching throughout the length of the seemingly endless wedding reception, but patience had won out. Now, with the palace quiet, and the vizier's "elite guards" unconscious behind him, he was finally free to complete his mission.

The lock clicked open under Jack's expert fingers. After moving into the vizier's private study, he paused briefly to let his eyes adjust to the darkness. A quick glance about the room located the enormous portrait of the vizier—without the warts of course—that, according to his intelligence reports, concealed a secret compartment containing the empire's war plans.

His smile was cut short by a light appearing behind him and the chortle of the vizier's chief of security. "So, it would appear that we have found a spy. Guards ... hurt him."

As Jack's far-from-ceremonial rapier leaped into his hands he couldn't help thinking, Thank Pelor for Sergei's fencing lessons!

The Royal Heralds serve as the eyes and the ears of the Queen. Reporting directly to Lord Chamberlain Kell Fleming, the Heralds travel far and wide, gathering information as they go. Most people see the Royal Heralds as little more than a group of diplomats, messengers, and errand-runners, and that's exactly how the Heralds want it.

HISTORY OF THE ROYAL HERALDS

The first Royal Heralds were exactly that: messengers of the Crown. Over the years, however, the monarchs of the kingdom had occasional need for a particularly trusted errand-runner or information gatherer. When a wise lord chamberlain (whose name has been lost to history) grew tired of repeatedly recruiting such trustworthy individuals, he created a network of skilled agents that would report directly to him. Once identified and recruited, each new Herald was trained in spycraft and diplomacy—at first by the lord chamberlain himself, and later by the chamberlain's hand-picked officers and senior agents.

Within a generation, the group's founder had passed on and been replaced. But the network of Heralds lived on, thriving in the kingdom's

climate of political intrigue. As time passed, the organization continued to grow. While occasional lapses in security have threatened to pull away the Heralds' cover of secrecy, they have managed time and again to turn crises into opportunities.

Today, no one person knows all the Heralds' identities, but it is believed that the group numbers over two hundred. Lord Chamberlain Kell Fleming retains his leadership of the Heralds, though he secretly realizes that even he is no longer fully in control of his network of spies and agents.

HERALD RESPONSIBILITIES

The chamberlain assigns some Heralds for "internal duties," meaning that they restrict their activities to within the kingdom. These Heralds watch for potential insurgency, foreign spies, government corruption, and other problems facing the kingdom. They pose as minor officials, traveling merchants, itinerant performers, or even adventurers, depending on the task and area.

Heralds working within the kingdom can count on strong support. Most junior Heralds work "internal" until they prove their ability to work independently. They file frequent reports to their superior officers and are kept on a short leash.

The majority of Heralds are assigned to "foreign affairs." These Heralds travel to other kingdoms far and near, where they use their formidable skills to learn the kingdoms' secrets, deliver clandestine messages, rescue prisoners, kidnap nobles, or foment discord. Most carry a title like "emissary" or "ambassador" that helps get them into foreign courts. Those working incognito might pose as traders, wealthy travelers, or even minor royalty.

Heralds assigned to foreign kingdoms must rely almost completely on their own abilities. Only rarely can the Lord Chamberlain supply any assistance to these faraway servants. In some cases, Heralds must go without contact from home for months or years. Stories persist of one Herald who posed as a spice merchant in a distant empire for six years before he was able to complete his mission.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Royal Heralds accept characters of all classes, though some—particularly bards and rogues, with their appropriate array of class skills—tend to make better Heralds than others. Still, the Heralds employ plenty of fighters, monks, and rangers; a cleric, sorcerer, or wizard with the right mix of spells can also be an exceptional Herald. Druids, paladins, and barbarians tend to make poor Heralds, though rare exceptions exist. It's rumored that the Lord Chamberlain employs a few assassins for particularly devious assignments. The most prized Heralds, of course, are those who actually advance in the herald prestige class. (See below.)

A Herald's most important ability scores are Charisma, Wisdom, and Dexterity. While Heralds tend to have a wide range of skills, aptitude in interaction, detection, and stealth are critical. Skills such as Bluff, Diplomacy, Disguise, Forgery, Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Sense Motive, and Spot are all important to a good Herald. Gather Information is a must—if a Herald can't dig up rumors, he'll have trouble handling missions.

Above all else, a Herald must be absolutely loyal to the Queen. The Lord Chamberlain doesn't accept even the rumor of disloyalty, and he won't hesitate to use magical means to confirm or dispel such suspicions.

PC HERALDS

Obviously, player characters who belong to the Royal Heralds have a dual allegiance: both to their fellow adventurers and to the Crown. This can create many interesting situations, but it shouldn't be allowed to interfere with the group's enjoyment. PC Heralds can have a longer leash than other Heralds—perhaps the PC is a special operative who works only occasional missions, or a "sleeper agent" who waits for a particular event for activation.

It also isn't critical that all characters belong to the Heralds, though any Heralds in the group should keep either the organization's motives and activities relatively quiet or be absolutely certain of the group's ability to keep secrets.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

The chief benefit derived from membership in the Royal Heralds is the authority vested by the Queen. Every Herald, from the rawest recruit to the most senior veteran, carries with him the authority to act in the Queen's best

The Lord Chamberlain, Kell Fleming

Male human, 6th-level aristocrat/ 6th-level herald

Strength	10 (+0)	Fort. Save	+5
Dexterity	15 (+2)	Ref. Save	+9
Constitution	12 (+1)	Will Save	+13
Intelligence	12 (+1)	Alignment	NG
Wisdom	16 (+3)	Speed	30
Charisma	16 (+3)	Size	M (5'10")

Armor Class	12	Melee Attack	+8/+3
Hit Points	65	Ranged Attack	+10/+5

Special: Evasion, false alignment, nondetection, sneak attack +3d6, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC).
Skills: Bluff +16, Diplomacy +18, Gather Information +13, Intimidate +10, Listen +10, Read Lips +5, Search +5, Sense Motive +13, Spot +9.
Feats: Alertness, Improved Initiative, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Bluff).
Languages: Common, Dwarven, Elven.
Spells Known (5/4/4/2): 0—*daze, ghost sound, guidance, mage hand, prestidigitation;* 1st—*change self, charm person, glib tongue, message;* 2nd—*detect thoughts, invisibility, lord's charisma, suggestion;* 3rd—*detect scrying, illusory script.*
Possessions: *+2 dagger, ring of mind shielding, figurine of wondrous power (silver raven), goggles of night.*
Background: Kell Fleming was a typical lazy aristocrat working as an assistant to the former Lord Chamberlain when he stumbled across a secret meeting of the Royal Heralds. Faced with the need to control the possible leak, the Heralds decided to recruit Fleming rather than silence him. To their (and his) good fortune, Fleming took to the work with a passion and proved a natural at spycraft. Over the years, his contacts among the nobles of the land proved extremely useful, and when the former chamberlain died in his sleep two years ago, the Queen named Fleming as his successor.

Jherrith Mandrakesson, Former Herald

Male halfling, 5th-level cleric/3rd-level herald/2nd-level rogue

Strength	8 (-1)	Fort. Save	+6
Dexterity	14 (+2)	Ref. Save	+11
Constitution	8 (-1)	Will Save	+12
Intelligence	10 (+0)	Alignment	N
Wisdom	16 (+3)	Speed	20
Charisma	14 (+2)	Size	M (3' 2")

Armor Class	18	Melee Attack	+7/+2
Hit Points	35	Ranged Attack	+10/+5

Special: Evasion, false alignment, rebuke undead, sneak attack +2d6, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC).
Skills: Bluff +12, Concentration +4, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +5, Gather Information +12, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Listen +9, Sense Motive +11, Speak Language (Dwarven), Spot +9,
Feats: Alertness, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative.
Languages: Common, Dwarven, Halfling.
Cleric Spells (5/4/3/2): 0—*guidance* (x2), *light, mending, read magic;* 1st—*command, comprehend languages, obscuring mist, sanctuary;* 2nd—*animal messenger, silence, zone of truth;* 3rd—*cure serious wounds, dispel magic.*
Domain Spells: 1st—*change self, entropic shield;* 2nd—*aid, invisibility;* 3rd—*nondetection, protection from elements.*
(Jherrth is a cleric of Olidammara; his domains are Luck and Trickery.)
Herald Spells Known (3/2/1): 0—*distract, ghost sound, mage hand, open/close;* 1st—*glib tongue, sleep;* 2nd—*suggestion.*
Possessions: *+1 short sword, +1 hand crossbow,* 20 *+1 bolts, +1 glamered studded leather, +1 cloak of resistance, +1 ring of protection, ring of mind shielding, potion of neutralize poison, potion of cure serious wounds, potion of haste.*
Background: See "Enemies" section.

interests and the knowledge that his actions will be supported by her agents. This support can take the form of gold, weapons, magic, supplies, letters of marque, or royal dispensations, to name a few. While serving as a Royal Herald, a character is an extension of the Queen's own hand and is treated as such.

With that benefit comes a drawback, however. Despite the support of the Queen, the Herald must work in complete secrecy. He cannot share the knowledge of his responsibility and authority with those outside the organization, nor can he take advantage of his position for personal gain. He also loses a measure of personal freedom, as he can be ordered to travel hundreds of miles at a moment's notice.

Still, the Queen rewards those who serve her well. Royal Heralds who survive the first few years can enjoy a life of moderate luxury, while those who manage to retire after many years of service find themselves well compensated for their loyalty and bravery. Titles, tracts of land, and cushy positions among the Queen's ministers await the Herald who finally decides to take it easy.

ENEMIES

As the existence of the Heralds remains a secret, no group realizes who is behind the thwarting of their plans. Still, it is safe to say that most foreign rulers and governments would count the Heralds among their enemies.

However, there are those within the organization whose goals differ from the Lord Chamberlain's. After many years of loyal service, veteran Herald Jherrith Mandrakesson (a cleric of Olidammara) believes that the Lord Chamberlain no longer has the Queen's best interests at heart. Deciding to choose for himself who should be investigated, what kingdoms should be sown with discord, and which foreign royals should be assassinated, Jherrith has recruited his own secret cell within the Heralds that he uses to accomplish missions of his own planning. Sometimes he even uses these recruits to thwart the actions of other Heralds.

The twelve rogues, bards, and wizards working for Jherrith operate out of an abandoned warehouse near the docks. So far, Jherrith has managed to maintain the group's cover, and the Lord Chamberlain hasn't connected recent Herald failures with an organized resistance.

ALLIES

Due to their need for secrecy, the Royal Heralds don't have true allies. Individual agents often have many contacts, resources, and safe houses that they use from time to time during missions.

WITH A TWIST ...

If you want a different spin on the Royal Heralds, here are a few options.

- The Heralds serve the Lord Chamberlain as his personal secret police, without any authorization or knowledge of the Queen. Eventually, Fleming plans to use his network of spies and assassins to launch a coup.
- The Heralds don't actually work for the Lord Chamberlain at all—that's just what the person who recruited the PCs wants them to think. In actuality, the Royal Heralds are an independent organization dedicated to digging up the secrets of every kingdom in the region, with the goal of blackmailing nobles and fomenting wars for profit.
- Use the Heralds as written, but assign them to the service of a kingdom at war with the PCs' homeland. The Heralds can make a great enemy organization to pit against your PCs, particularly as the characters become influential in the kingdom.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

- The PCs are traveling across the countryside not far from the Queen's Castle and find a dead man lying by the side of the road. The man, a Royal Herald working "internal," was killed by brigands who didn't know his identity. Though his possessions are gone, he still carries a small scrap of paper concealed in the seam of his tunic (Search check DC 15 to find). The paper is addressed to the Lord Chamberlain and bears the Herald's final report on a group of rebels plotting the assassination of a local dignitary. Curious characters can investigate the report or deliver it directly to the chamberlain. This adventure hook can both introduce the PCs to the Royal Heralds and give the Lord Chamberlain some idea of their loyalty to the Crown.
- The PC members of the Heralds are assigned to spy on one of the Queen's ministers. The Lord Chamberlain suspects the man of being a traitor to the Crown, but he needs strong evidence because of the man's connection to wealthy families. At the DM's discretion, Fleming's suspicion might or might not be well-founded—the minister might be a spy, a double agent, or even a patsy for someone looking to cover up his own illicit activities.
- The only copy of a peace treaty between the PCs' kingdom and a neighboring land has gone missing from the Royal Depository. While the document in question doesn't contain state secrets or other valuable information, its loss could prove a serious blow to future talks between the two kingdoms. The PCs must track down the stolen document quickly—before word of its disappearance leaks out—and return it, intact, to the Lord Chamberlain. The treaty might have been stolen by someone within the government who wishes to ruin relations between the two kingdoms, by an agent of a third kingdom, or even by a thief who didn't realize the value of what she now holds.
- One of the senior Heralds assigned to foreign affairs has been arrested on charges of treason against the kingdom to which she is assigned. Though her true mission remains a secret (for now), the Heralds cannot risk her knowledge being disclosed. The Lord Chamberlain sends the PCs to the foreign kingdom with simple orders: They must either rescue the imprisoned Herald (without her captors realizing her escape is part of an organized plan) or ensure that she does not live to divulge her secrets. Good-aligned PCs might have difficulty with the second option and must weigh their conscience against their duty to the Queen.
- Duke Vasily Rasputin, a prominent nobleman of a neighboring kingdom, is vocally pushing for his lord to declare war against the PCs' home nation. The Lord Chamberlain fears that the lord in question, a rather weak-willed man, might soon agree with Vasily's viewpoint and orders the PCs to assassinate the duke before war is declared. Of course, they must carry out their mission with the utmost secrecy—if anyone even suspects that the PCs' kingdom is behind the duke's death, war will result. This mission is not appropriate for good-aligned PCs unless the DM wishes to challenge the characters' morals and ethics.

DUE TO THEIR NEED FOR SECRECY, ROYAL HERALDS DON'T HAVE TRUE ALLIES.

Melea Arbrynnen, Royal Herald

Female half-elf, 1st-level herald/ 6th-level rogue

Strength	10 (+0)	Fort. Save	+2
Dexterity	16 (+3)	Ref. Save	+10
Constitution	10 (+0)	Will Save	+5
Intelligence	14 (+2)	Alignment	LN
Wisdom	13 (+1)	Speed	30
Charisma	15 (+2)	Size	M (5' 4")
Armor Class	15	Melee Attack	+4
Hit Points	25	Ranged Attack	+7

Special: Evasion, false alignment, sneak attack +3d6, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked).
Skills: Bluff +11, Diplomacy +7, Gather Information +11, Hide +12, Listen +13, Move Silently +12, Read Lips +11, Search +11, Speak Language (Gnome), Spot +8.
Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Expertise.
Languages: Common, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome.
Spells Known (2/1): 0—*distract, mage hand;* 2nd—*comprehend languages*
Possessions: *+1 short sword, +1 leather armor, ring of chameleon power, potion of fly, potion of cure moderate wounds,* masterwork hand crossbow, 10 bolts.
Background: Melea Arbrynnen is a typical mid-rank Royal Herald. She can serve as a recruiter for the PCs, an agent assigned to watch over them, or a potential double agent pitted against the PCs.

The Royal Herald prestige class ...

Herald Prestige Class

Class Features

• **Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** A herald is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and with light armor.

• **Spells:** A herald casts arcane spells from the herald spell list. (See below.) She casts these spells without needing to prepare them beforehand or keep a spellbook. Heralds receive bonus spells for high Charisma. To cast a spell, a herald must have a Charisma score of 10 + the level of the spell. The Difficulty Class for a saving throw against a herald's spell is 10 + the spell's level + the herald's Charisma modifier. The herald's effective casting level is equal to her herald class level.

• **False Alignment:** A herald of 1st level or higher receives a Will saving throw against any attempt to discern her alignment or aura (such as with a *detect good* spell or the divine version of the *true seeing* spell). The DC of the saving throw is 10 + the spell's level + the caster's ability modifier. If the saving throw is successful, the herald can disguise her alignment with an alignment of her choice. This is a supernatural ability.

• **Sneak Attack:** A herald can strike a vital spot for extra damage. Any time the herald's target would be denied a Dexterity bonus to AC (whether her target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when the herald flanks the target, the herald's attack deals extra damage. The extra damage is +1d6 at 2nd level and an additional 1d6 every two levels thereafter. This ability is otherwise identical to the rogue's sneak attack and is cumulative with any sneak attack capability the character has from other classes.

• **Uncanny Dodge:** Starting at 3rd level, the herald gains the extraordinary ability to react to danger before her senses would normally allow her to do so. At 3rd level and above, she retains her Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) regardless of being caught flat-footed or being struck by an invisible attacker. She still loses her Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized. At 7th level, the herald can no longer be flanked, as she can react to opponents on opposite sides of her as easily as she can react to a single attacker. This defense denies other characters the ability to use flank attacks to sneak attack her. The exception to this defense is that a rogue at least four levels higher than the character can flank her (and thus sneak attack her).

The character's herald levels are cumulative with her levels in any other class that has the uncanny dodge ability for the purposes of determining the character's total uncanny dodge. For instance, a 6th-level rogue/5th-level herald would have uncanny dodge equal to an 11th-level herald.

• ***Nondetection:*** Starting at 5th level, a herald has a permanent *nondetection* effect (as the spell). If a divination is attempted against the herald or anything he carries, the caster of the divination must succeed in a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) against a DC of 15 + the herald's class level. This is a spell-like ability.

• **Skill Mastery:** At 9th level, the herald selects a number of skills equal to 3 + her Intelligence modifier. When making a skill check with one of these skills, the herald can take 10 even if stress and distractions would normally prevent her from doing so. She becomes so certain in those skills that she can use them reliably even under adverse conditions.

Table 1: The Herald — **Hit Die: d6**

Level	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special	Spells 0	1	2	3	4
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	False alignment	2	0	—	—	—
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Sneak attack +1d6	3	1	—	—	—
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus)	3	1	0	—	—
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Sneak attack +2d6	3	2	1	—	—
5	+3	+1	+4	+4	*Nondetection*	4	2	1	0	—
6	+4	+2	+5	+5	Sneak attack +3d6	4	2	2	1	—
7	+5	+2	+5	+5	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)	4	3	2	1	0
8	+6/+1	+2	+6	+6	Sneak attack +4d6	4	3	2	2	1
9	+6/+1	+3	+6	+6	Skill mastery	4	3	3	2	1
10	+7/+2	+3	+7	+7	Sneak attack +5d6	4	4	3	2	2

Table 2: Herald Spells Known

	Spells Known				
Level	0	1	2	3	4
1	3	1*	—	—	—
2	4	2	—	—	—
3	4	2	1*	—	—
4	4	3	2	—	—
5	5	3	2	1*	—
6	5	3	3	2	—
7	5	4	3	2	1*
8	5	4	3	3	2
9	5	4	4	3	2
10	5	4	4	3	3

*Provided the herald has sufficient Charisma to have a bonus spell of this level.

Requirements

To qualify to become a herald, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack: +4 or better
Bluff ranks: 4
Diplomacy ranks: 6
Gather Information ranks: 6
Sense Motive ranks: 4
Special: Must speak at least three languages.

Class Skills

Skill Points at Each Level: 4+Int modifier

The herald's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are:

Bluff (Cha)
Decipher Script (Int, exclusive skill)
Diplomacy (Cha)
Disguise (Cha)
Forgery (Int)
Gather Information (Cha)
Hide (Dex)
Innuendo (Wis)
Intimidate (Cha)
Knowledge (any) (Int)
Listen (Wis)
Move Silently (Dex)
Open Lock (Dex)
Perform (Cha)
Read Lips (Int)
Scry (Int)
Search (Int)
Sense Motive (Wis)
Speak Language
Spot (Wis)

New Spells

Distract

Enchantment [Compulsion]
Level: Hrd 0
Components: S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Close (25 ft + 5 ft/2 levels)
Target: One creature
Duration: One round
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

This spell distracts its target for a full round, giving it a -10 penalty to any Spot or Listen checks during that time. The spell is commonly used to give the caster the ability to dart across an open hallway guarded by a sentry or to perform a move-equivalent action without being detected. If the creature is currently being threatened or attacked by you or your allies, however, it receives a +5 circumstance bonus on its saving throw. Any act that threatens the distracted creature breaks the spell, as does any attack made against it.

Eagle Eyes

Transmutation
Level: Hrd 3
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The target of this spell gains extraordinary visual acuity. This grants a +20 bonus to Search and Spot checks for the duration of the spell.

Material Component: A pinch of diamond dust (worth 10 gp) sprinkled over the target's eyes.

Glib Tongue

Transmutation
Level: Hrd 1
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 10 minutes/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You grant the target of the spell a +4 competence bonus to Diplomacy and Bluff skill checks. This bonus increases by +2 for every two levels of the caster beyond 1st (+6 at 3rd, +8 at 5th, and so on) to a maximum of +16 at 9th level.

Lord's Charisma

Transmutation
Level: Hrd 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 hour/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The transmuted creature becomes more personable, charming, and socially graceful. The spell grants an enhancement bonus to Charisma of 1d4+1 points, adding the usual benefits to all uses of the Charisma score modifier. No additional bonus spells are granted by the increased ability score.

Sudden Mastery

Transmutation
Level: Hrd 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 10 minutes/level

You gain a +20 competence bonus to a single skill of your choice. You can't select a skill that is exclusive to another class.

HERALD SPELL LIST

0-Level Spells
Dancing lights, daze, distract, ghost sound, guidance, know direction, light, mage hand, open/close, prestidigitation.*
1st-Level Spells
Alarm, change self, charm person, comprehend languages, endure elements, detect secret doors, glib tongue, message, sleep, spider climb.*
2nd-Level Spells
Arcane lock, cat's grace, darkness, detect thoughts, invisibility, knock, locate object, lord's charisma, silence, suggestion.*
3rd-Level Spells
Clairaudience/ clairvoyance, darkvision, detect scrying, eagle eyes, hold person, illusory script, Leomund's tiny hut, nondetection, shrink item, tongues.*
4th-Level Spells
*Discern lies, dimension door, dominate person, freedom of movement, legend lore, modify memory, scrying, sending, speak with dead, sudden mastery.**

* New herald spells

Nodwick
BY
JOHN KOVALIC
HMM. A TURBONIUM DRAGON. WANT TO TAKE THE LEAD, YEAGER?
SURE. LET ME GRAB A WEAPON AND...
RUN AWAY!
YOU KNOW, IT'S HARD TO RUN FAR WHEN THESE FRAMES ARE SO SMALL!
WHERE'S NODWICK?
AHHH, NODWICK! THE REAL BRAINS BEHIND THE ADVENTURING PARTY! HOW I HAVE LOOKED FORWARD TO THIS MEETING HENCH-MAN!
UH...
LET ME SAMPLE YOUR SIMPLE YET DEEP WIT! GIVE ME A CYNICAL, WORLD-WEARY ASIDE YOU ARE SO FAMED FOR! SAY SOMETHING PROFOUND AND WISE!
OK...
EAT HOT SWORD, WYRM BUTT!
ERR...
SMUK
YO! ORCS! SAMPLE SOME HENCHMAN BLOOD-LUST VIA A REPEATING CROSSBOW!
BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA
SPLIK SPLIK SPLIK
YEAGER! HERE'S YOUR SWORD BACK! OOPS! MY BAD! HA HA HA HA HA!
ERR...
SPLUT
ARTAX! THIS IS THANKS FOR THAT LAST FIRE-BALL SPELL OF YOURS ... THAT MISSED!
ERR...
SMEK
AND NOW PIFFANY, SWEET, SWEET PIFFANY... HOW I HAVE LONGED FOR THIS MOMENT, MY PETITE BICHETTE OF BEATIFIC BEAUTY...
ERR...
OK. WHY DON'T WE START THIS SCENARIO OVER WITH AN EYE TO STAYING IN CHARACTER, IGOR?
I WANNA ROLL ON THE SWEET-TALK CUTE CLERIC TABLE! HUZZAH!
OK... WHAT KIND OF SAVING ROLL DOES THIRD EDITION GIVE YOU WHEN YOU'VE BEEN CUT IN HALF...?

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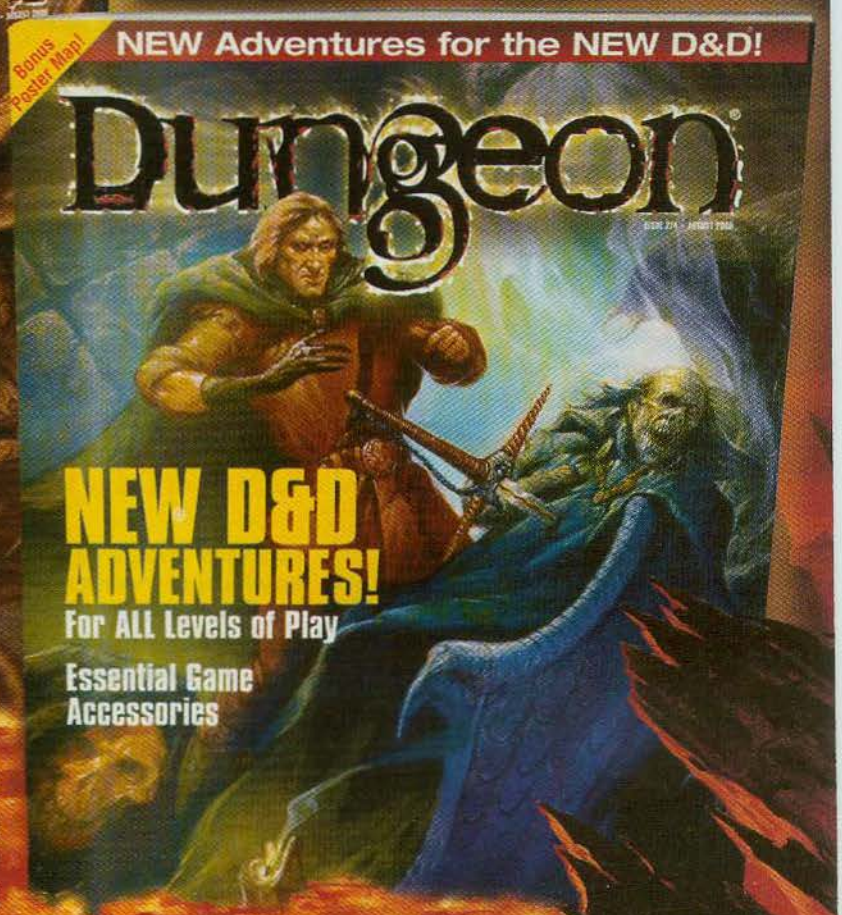

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Class Combos

Give 'Em the Old One-Two

by James Wyatt • illustrated by Darrell Riche

The new edition of the D&D game allows truly unlimited multiclassing. There are 55 different two-class combinations, and when you consider combinations of up to four classes, there are 550 total options! In the context of the game world, people might think of many of these combinations as distinct professions or classes. You can think of them as a way to make your character fill a niche that no one else can.

There are some multiclass combinations that are merely simple ways to get a benefit for your character. On the surface, these "cheesy multiclasses" seem like almost ridiculous attempts to maximize a character's abilities. Actually, these combinations demonstrate the power and flexibility of D&D's multiclassing rules, because even these combinations don't break the game. While you might gain something you want from these combinations, you sacrifice some advantages as well—and your character remains balanced with the other PCs in the game.

A Level of Rogue

Starting as a 1st-level rogue before switching to another class gets you a lot of skill points to start with. You'll also gain the ability to sneak attack (for +1d6 damage) and a good starting Reflex save, which never hurts. On the other hand, you'll start with only 6 hit points (plus your Constitution modifier), which is less than you'd get with most other classes. You'll also notice that with just one level of rogue, you don't get access to evasion or uncanny dodge, some of the rogue's best abilities.

You'll also end up with more skills than you can really maintain once you start advancing levels in another class. While you might have nine or ten skills at 4 ranks at 1st level (assuming you have a positive Intelligence modifier), when you reach 2nd level you can only raise three or four of them by 1 rank if you take a class with only 2 skill points per level. In other words, you'll start with a lot of skills, but you'll only master a few of them in the long run. If that's what you're looking for, starting off with a level of rogue is not a bad idea, but remember that the ultimate cost for any "cheesy multiclass" is that you'll have one less level of your second class.

A Level of Fighter

You take a level of rogue for the skill points, but you take a level of fighter if it's feats you're after. This is a good option: You start off with 10 hit points,

CHAMPION

The champion (cleric/fighter) is a martial priest, taking the combat training of the single-classed cleric one step further with occasional levels of fighter. As the name implies, they often serve as the elite military force of a militant temple or a war deity's clergy.

Champions take more cleric levels than fighter levels. This allows them decent spell access, while still providing them with martial weapons proficiency, extra feats, and more hit points from the fighter levels.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class cleric)

- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Fortitude saves
- Proficiency with all martial weapons
- Four bonus feats
- Access to weapon specialization
- Access to fighter class skills

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class cleric)

- Slower spell progression
- Worse Will saves

a bonus feat, and a +1 base attack bonus. What you lose is skill points, and, of course, a level of your second class. You can begin as a fighter and then multiclass to paladin to help you master, say, the mounted combat feats earlier than you would otherwise, but the price you pay is waiting another level before you get your special mount (as well as the other class abilities of the paladin). If you start as a fighter and then multiclass to rogue, your skills really suffer for want of the bonus points at 1st level. Assuming you have an above-average Intelligence, you'll start with four or five skills at 4 ranks each. When you reach 2nd level and take your 1st level of rogue, you'll get 9 or 10 skill points—allowing you just five or six skills at 5 ranks. If you'd started as a rogue, you'd have nine or ten skills at 5 ranks by 2nd level. That really hurts a rogue, whose skills are one of her best class abilities.

A Level of Cleric

There's nothing to sneeze at here. Your whole party will thank you for the extra healing potential you bring to the group. You'll start with a decent 8 hit points (plus your Constitution modifier), the ability to turn undead, and a respectable handful of spells to contribute, whether in combat or for healing afterward. As with a level of fighter, though, you'll suffer where skill points are concerned. If you multiclass by taking a class of fighter or another combat-oriented class, you'll miss the +1 base attack bonus and the extra feat you might have had if you had started as a fighter.

A Level of Sorcerer

You probably won't want to start your character as a sorcerer with the intention of advancing primarily in another class. Starting with only 4 hit points, even with a high Constitution, is quite a drawback for a fighter-type, and 2 skill points hurts a rogue-to-be. Still, sorcerer is not a bad class to pick up at 2nd level—you'll get a handful of useful spells that you can cast many times. Pick those spells carefully, since they'll need to be as useful to you when you're 10th level as they are at 2nd level. You can also get a familiar, though it won't advance as it would if you were gaining sorcerer levels. As usual, the price you pay for all this extra flexibility is the levels you would otherwise have gained in another class—along with the hit points, skill points, spells, and the other class features of your second class.

WIZARD OR SORCERER?

The spellfilcher and spellsword are multiclass arcane spellcasters—rogues and fighters, respectively. The sample level progressions use the wizard class as the spellcasting class for both of these multiclasses. The main reason for this is that multiclassing already slows down the process of gaining new spell levels, and advancing as a sorcerer instead of a wizard would only compound that effect. Also, a sorcerer's slightly better weapon selection offsets one of the primary benefits of taking another class, making the sacrifices a little harder because the payoff is slightly smaller. Otherwise, sorcerer is not at all a bad choice for these multiclass combinations, particularly since they tend to focus on a small selection of core spells anyway.

ICONIC MULTICLASSES

While the "cheesy multiclasses" are ways to gain a slight edge for your character, iconic multiclasses are class combinations that represent a distinct character archetype, in the same way the eleven standard classes do. These iconic multiclasses include the champion (cleric/fighter), nature's champion (druid/ranger), scout (ranger/rogue), skald (barbarian/bard), spellfilcher (rogue/wizard or sorcerer), spellsword (fighter/wizard or sorcerer), and the tracker (barbarian/ranger).

Each "iconic multiclass" has a suggested level progression that maximizes the benefits from each class. An even level progression is often not the best plan, particularly when spellcasting classes are involved. However, if neither class is a character's racially favored class, a more even level progression is a good idea. The level progressions offered are suggestions only.

CHARACTER CHOICES

Fighters and clerics have the same skill point allotment (2 + Int modifier per level), but there is little overlap between the class skills of the two classes. Most champions begin with fighter class skills like Climb, Jump, and Swim, and they advance these skills only when they gain fighter levels. They then lag behind their maximum ranks in clerical skills like Knowledge (religion) and Spellcraft.

Champions tend to focus on combat-oriented rather than metamagic or item creation feats. Some do take Extra Turning, and a few maximize the combat effectiveness of their spells with metamagic feats like Maximize Spell and Empower Spell. To cover their weak Reflex saves, many champions also choose Lightning Reflexes. Even so, feats like Weapon Focus, Power Attack, and Weapon Specialization are the champion's favorites.

Character Level	Class Levels	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Ftr 1	+1	+2	+0	+0	10	Martial weapon proficiency, bonus fighter feat
2	Ftr 1/Clr 1	+1	+4	+0	+2	14	0- and 1st-level spells, turning
3	Ftr 1/Clr 2	+2	+5	+0	+3	18	Feat
4	Ftr 1/Clr 3	+3	+5	+1	+3	22	2nd-level spells, ability increase
5	Ftr 2/Clr 3	+4	+6	+1	+3	27	Bonus fighter feat
6	Ftr 2/Clr 4	+5	+7	+1	+4	31	Feat
7	Ftr 2/Clr 5	+5	+7	+1	+4	35	3rd-level spells
8	Ftr 3/Clr 5	+6/+1	+7	+2	+5	40	Ability increase
9	Ftr 3/Clr 6	+7/+2	+8	+3	+6	44	Feat
10	Ftr 3/Clr 7	+8/+3	+8	+3	+6	48	4th-level spells
11	Ftr 4/Clr 7	+9/+4	+9	+3	+6	53	Bonus fighter feat, weapon specialization
12	Ftr 4/Clr 8	+10/+5	+10	+3	+7	57	Feat, ability increase
13	Ftr 4/Clr 9	+10/+5	+10	+4	+7	61	5th-level spells
14	Ftr 5/Clr 9	+11/+6/+1	+10	+4	+7	66	
15	Ftr 5/Clr 10	+12/+7/+2	+11	+4	+8	70	Feat
16	Ftr 5/Clr 11	+13/+8/+3	+11	+4	+8	74	6th-level spells, ability increase
17	Ftr 6/Clr 11	+14/+9/+4	+12	+5	+9	79	Bonus fighter feat
18	Ftr 6/Clr 12	+15/+10/+5	+13	+6	+10	83	Feat
19	Ftr 6/Clr 13	+15/+10/+5	+13	+6	+10	87	7th-level spells
20	Ftr 6/Clr 14	+16/+11/+6/+1	+14	+6	+11	91	Ability increase

NATURE'S CHAMPION

What the champion is to temples, the nature's champion (druid/ranger) is to druidic circles: a priestly figure with extensive combat training. They militantly guard their territories and hunt down enemies of their circles.

Nature's champions choose more druid levels than ranger, maximizing their druid spell progression while gaining the key benefits of the ranger class.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class druid)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Fortitude saves
- Class abilities: two-weapon fighting, Track, favored enemies, ranger spells
- Access to ranger class skills

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class druid)
- Slower access to spell levels, maximum 8th-level spells
- Slower *wild shape* progression
- Weaker Will saves

SCOUT

Whether surveying unfamiliar terrain, assessing an enemy's defenses, or preparing an ambush, scouts (ranger/rogues) combine stealth and combat prowess to deadly effect. They often serve as elite military forces, but they are just as effective in an adventuring party.

Scouts advance levels in their two classes evenly, balancing the abilities of each class. With each rogue level, the scout gains valuable skill points, sneak attack, and other benefits, while each ranger level increases the base attack bonus and hit points.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class rogue)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Fortitude saves
- Class abilities: two-weapon fighting, Track, favored enemies, ranger spells
- Rogue's skill points and class skills overlap where it counts: Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Search, Spot

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class rogue)
- Slower access to class abilities

SKALD

Skalds (barbarian/bards) are epic storytellers, an inspiration to their companions, and accomplished combatants. They are the lorekeepers of barbarian tribes—historians, entertainers, sometimes even chieftains.

Skalds advance their levels in both classes evenly. The skill-based nature of the bardic music class ability allows skalds to get full use of that ability even when advancing barbarian levels.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class bard)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Fortitude saves

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class bard)
- Slower access to most class abilities and bard spells
- Other skills suffer for the sake of Perform

CHARACTER CHOICES

Druids and rangers have the same skill point allotment per level (4 + Int mod) and a nearly identical list of class skills. Most nature's champions avoid skills that are class skills for only one of their classes, choosing instead to maximize their ranks in the skills that are common to both classes—key nature skills like Animal Empathy, Handle Animal, Intuit Direction, Knowledge (nature), and Wilderness Lore.

Most nature's champions find that the ranger's free feats—Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Ambidexterity—are all the combat feats they need, focusing on metamagic and item creation feats instead. They have a reputation as prolific brewers of potions.

Character Level	Class Levels	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Rgr 1	+1	+2	+0	+0	10	Track, favored enemy, two-weapon fighting
2	Rgr 1/Drd 1	+1	+4	+0	+2	14	0 and 1st-level spells, nature sense
3	Rgr 1/Drd 2	+2	+5	+0	+3	18	Woodland stride, feat
4	Rgr 1/Drd 3	+3	+5	+1	+3	22	2nd-level spells, trackless step, ability increase
5	Rgr 2/Drd 3	+4	+6	+1	+3	27	
6	Rgr 2/Drd 4	+5	+7	+1	+4	31	Resist nature's lure, feat
7	Rgr 2/Drd 5	+5	+7	+1	+4	35	3rd-level spells, *wild shape* (1/day)
8	Rgr 3/Drd 5	+6/+1	+7	+2	+5	40	Ability increase
9	Rgr 3/Drd 6	+7/+2	+8	+3	+6	44	*Wild shape* (2/day), feat
10	Rgr 3/Drd 7	+8/+3	+8	+3	+6	48	4th-level spells, *wild shape* (3/day)
11	Rgr 4/Drd 7	+9/+4	+9	+3	+6	53	1st-level ranger spells
12	Rgr 4/Drd 8	+10/+5	+10	+3	+7	57	*Wild shape* (Large), feat, ability increase
13	Rgr 4/Drd 9	+10/+5	+10	+4	+7	61	5th-level spells, venom immunity
14	Rgr 5/Drd 9	+11/+6/+1	+10	+4	+7	66	Second favored enemy
15	Rgr 5/Drd 10	+12/+7/+2	+11	+4	+8	70	*Wild shape* (4/day), feat
16	Rgr 5/Drd 11	+13/+8/+3	+11	+4	+8	74	6th-level spells, *wild shape* (Tiny), ability increase
17	Rgr 5/Drd 12	+14/+9/+4	+12	+5	+9	78	*Wild shape* (dire), feat
18	Rgr 5/Drd 13	+14/+9/+4	+12	+5	+9	82	7th-level spells, a thousand faces
19	Rgr 5/Drd 14	+15/+10/+5	+13	+5	+10	86	*Wild shape* (5/day)
20	Rgr 5/Drd 15	+16/+11/+6/+1	+13	+6	+10	90	8th-level spells, *wild shape* (Huge), timeless body, ability increase

CHARACTER CHOICES

Rogues have many more skill points than rangers, so most scouts focus on a selection of skills that are class skills for both classes. Starting as a rogue at 1st level means that a scout can have maximum ranks in these skills and a good selection of others. When advancing a ranger level, the scout can improve these core skills; when advancing a rogue level, she can improve all her skills.

A scout's ranger class gives her three free feats: Track, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Ambidexterity. Most scouts focus on the archery feats: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Far Shot, Rapid Shot, and Shot on the Run. Some prefer feats that put their Dexterity to good use and compensate for the light armor they prefer, like Dodge and Mobility.

Character Level	Class Levels	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Rog 1	+0	+0	+2	+0	6	Sneak attack +1d6, skills!
2	Rgr 1/Rog 1	+1	+2	+2	+0	11	Track, two-weapon fighting, martial weapons, favored enemy
3	Rgr 1/Rog 2	+2	+2	+3	+0	14	Evasion, feat
4	Rgr 2/Rog 2	+3	+3	+3	+0	19	Ability increase
5	Rgr 2/Rog 3	+4	+4	+3	+1	22	Uncanny dodge (dex bonus), sneak attack +2d6
6	Rgr 3/Rog 3	+5	+4	+4	+2	27	Feat
7	Rgr 3/Rog 4	+6/+1	+4	+5	+2	30	
8	Rgr 4/Rog 4	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	35	1st-level spells, ability increase
9	Rgr 4/Rog 5	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	38	Sneak attack +3d6, feat
10	Rgr 5/Rog 5	+8/+3	+5	+5	+2	43	Second favored enemy
11	Rgr 5/Rog 6	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	46	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)
12	Rgr 6/Rog 6	+10/+5	+7	+7	+4	51	Ability increase, feat
13	Rgr 6/Rog 7	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+4	54	Sneak attack +4d6
14	Rgr 7/Rog 7	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+4	59	
15	Rgr 7/Rog 8	+13/+8/+3	+7	+8	+4	62	Feat
16	Rgr 8/Rog 8	+14/+9/+4	+8	+8	+4	67	2nd-level spells, ability increase
17	Rgr 8/Rog 9	+14/+9/+4	+9	+8	+5	70	Sneak attack +5d6, feat
18	Rgr 9/Rog 9	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+6	75	
19	Rgr 9/Rog 10	+16/+11/+6/+1	+9	+10	+6	78	Rogue special ability
20	Rgr 10/Rog10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+6	83	Third favored enemy, ability increase

CHARACTER CHOICES

The key skill for a skald, as for a bard, is Perform. Though most skalds begin as barbarians (the extra 6 hit points are too hard to pass up), they still generally start with 2 ranks in Perform (using all of their skill points except any gained from Intelligence) and keep it as high as possible after that. At 2nd level, Perform becomes a class skill and a skald can buy 3 more ranks in it, bringing it to the maximum of 5 ranks. From that point on, a skald should increase Perform by 1 rank every level—using 2 skill points when gaining a barbarian level, but only 1 when gaining a bard level. While skalds' other skills suffer, these characters are as effective with their bardic music ability as single-classed bards.

Since skalds tend to focus more on combat than magic, they tend to choose combat-related feats—Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Cleave—rather than metamagic or item creation feats. Using metamagic feats on a bard spell turns it into a full-round action, and most skalds don't care to waste that much time. Some skalds do learn Extend Spell, so they can cast spells to aid their allies before combat begins and ensure that those spells will last the duration of the battle.

Character Level	Class Levels	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Bbn 1	+1	+2	+0	+0	12	Rage 1/day, fast movement
2	Bbn 1/Brd 1	+1	+2	+2	+2	15	Bardic music (inspire courage, countersong, *fascinate*), bardic knowledge, 0-level spells
3	Bbn 2/Brd 1	+2	+3	+2	+2	21	Inspire competence, uncanny dodge, feat
4	Bbn 2/Brd 2	+3	+3	+3	+3	24	1st-level spells, ability increase
5	Bbn 3/Brd 2	+4	+3	+4	+4	30	
6	Bbn 3/Brd 3	+5	+4	+4	+4	33	*Suggestion*, feat
7	Bbn 4/Brd 3	+6/+1	+5	+4	+4	39	Rage 2/day
8	Bbn 4/Brd 4	+7/+2	+5	+5	+5	42	2nd-level spells, ability increase
9	Bbn 5/Brd 4	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5	48	Inspire greatness, uncanny dodge (can't be flanked), feat
10	Bbn 5/Brd 5	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5	51	
11	Bbn 6/Brd 5	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6	57	
12	Bbn 6/Brd 6	+10/+5	+7	+7	+7	60	Ability increase, feat
13	Bbn 7/Brd 6	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+7	66	
14	Bbn 7/Brd 7	+12/+7/+2	+7	+7	+7	69	3rd-level spells
15	Bbn 8/Brd 7	+13/+8/+3	+8	+7	+7	75	Rage 3/day, feat
16	Bbn 8/Brd 8	+14/+9/+4	+8	+8	+8	78	Ability increase
17	Bbn 9/Brd 8	+15/+10/+5	+8	+9	+9	84	Feat
18	Bbn 9/Brd 9	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+9	87	
19	Bbn 10/Brd 9	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+9	+9	93	Uncanny dodge (+1 vs. traps)
20	Bbn 10/Brd10	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+10	96	4th-level spells, ability increase

SPELLFILCHER

Combining stealth through skill with stealth through magic, the spellfilcher (rogue/wizard) is the consummate thief. Magic can penetrate defenses that would foil an ordinary burglar. Some spellfilchers concentrate on mundane prizes—gold, gems, and objects of art—but more commonly, they target magic items or even wizards' spellbooks, hence their name.

Spellfilchers advance primarily as wizards, taking rogue levels only occasionally to boost skill points while getting as many spells as possible.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class wizard)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Reflex saves
- Rogue combat effectiveness: weapon proficiency, light armor, sneak attacks, evasion, and uncanny dodge
- More skill points and class skills for thievery

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class wizard)
- Worse Will save
- Slower access to metamagic feats and high-level spells

SPELLSWORD

Weaving magic with martial prowess, spellswords (fighter/wizards) fill many roles. Spellswords often support military units, while others use their magic to make magic items they can use in combat. Some spellswords concentrate on touch attack spells and unarmed combat, while others focus on archery and long-range attack spells.

Most spellswords advance their spellcasting class faster than their fighter class to gain high-level spells more quickly.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class wizard)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better base attack
- Better Fortitude saves
- Fighter combat effectiveness: weapon and armor proficiency (most wear only light armor), four bonus combat feats

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class wizard)
- Worse Will save
- Slower access to bonus wizard feats and high-level spells

TRACKER

The tracker (barbarian/ranger) is a master of wilderness lore. Whether finding quarry for the tribe's hunters or stalking more intelligent prey, the tracker is at home in the wild, and shares its primal fury.

In order to get the most of both classes' abilities, trackers advance levels in both classes evenly—beginning with barbarian for the hit points.

ADVANTAGES
(over single-class ranger)
- More hit points (on average)
- Better Fortitude saves
- Barbarian class abilities: rage, fast movement, uncanny dodge
- Shared skills like Handle Animal, Intuit Direction, Listen, and Wilderness Lore

DISADVANTAGES
(compared to single-class ranger)
- Slower access to class abilities and ranger spells

CHARACTER CHOICES

Spellfilchers use spells when they can (*invisibility, silence, knock*), often in preference to skills (Hide, Move Silently, Open Lock). Therefore, they use their Rogue skill points on Bluff, Climb, Disable Device, Escape Artist, Forgery, Gather Information, and Pick Pocket. Since they take comparatively few rogue levels and receive fewer skill points as wizards, spellfilchers never master all of these skills and usually concentrate in a few.

Spellfilchers love the metamagic feats Silent Spell, Still Spell, and Quicken Spell. Though their spell progression is slower than that of a single-class wizard, they still gain higher-level spells quickly enough to make these feats worthwhile. They are not inclined towards item creation, but love Spell Mastery, as it allows them to prepare spells even when captured and imprisoned.

Character Level	Class Levels	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Rog 1	+0	+0	+2	+0	6	Sneak attack +1d6, weapon proficiency
2	Rog 1/Wiz 1	+0	+0	+2	+2	8	0 and 1st-level spells, familiar, Scribe Scroll
3	Rog 1/Wiz 2	+1	+0	+2	+3	10	Feat
4	Rog 1/Wiz 3	+1	+1	+3	+3	12	2nd-level spells, ability increase
5	Rog 2/Wiz 3	+2	+1	+4	+3	15	Evasion
6	Rog 2/Wiz 4	+3	+1	+4	+4	17	Feat
7	Rog 2/Wiz 5	+3	+1	+4	+4	19	3rd-level spells, bonus wizard feat
8	Rog 3/Wiz 5	+4	+2	+4	+5	22	Uncanny dodge (Dex bonus), sneak attack +2d6, ability increase
9	Rog 3/Wiz 6	+5	+3	+5	+6	24	Feat
10	Rog 3/Wiz 7	+5	+3	+5	+6	26	4th-level spells
11	Rog 4/Wiz 7	+6/+1	+3	+6	+6	29	
12	Rog 4/Wiz 8	+7/+2	+3	+6	+7	31	Feat, ability increase
13	Rog 4/Wiz 9	+7/+2	+4	+7	+7	33	5th-level spells
14	Rog 5/Wiz 9	+7/+2	+4	+7	+7	36	Sneak attack +3d6
15	Rog 5/Wiz 10	+8/+3	+4	+7	+8	38	Bonus wizard feat, feat
16	Rog 5/Wiz 11	+8/+3	+4	+7	+8	40	6th-level spells, ability increase
17	Rog 6/Wiz 11	+9/+4	+5	+8	+9	43	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked)
18	Rog 6/Wiz 12	+10/+5	+6	+9	+10	47	Feat
19	Rog 6/Wiz 13	+10/+5	+6	+9	+10	49	7th-level spells
20	Rog 6/Wiz 14	+11/+6/+1	+6	+9	+11	51	Ability increase
OR	Rog 7/Wiz 13	+11/+6/+1	+6	+9	+10	52	Sneak attack +4d6, ability increase

CHARACTER CHOICES

Fighters and wizards have the same allotment of skill points but almost no overlap in class skills. Some spellswords purchase Spellcraft or Concentration as cross-class skills at 1st level, while others buy multiple ranks when they take their first wizard level (at their 2nd character level). They generally try to find a balance between skills that are useful to wizards and more physical skills, like Jump and Climb.

Likewise, spellswords choose metamagic and item creation feats as well as combat feats. Since both of their classes bestow bonus feats, this balance is not so difficult to attain. Combat Casting is virtually a requirement for these battle mages, and most choose Weapon Specialization at 11th level. Since most spellswords have high Intelligence scores, they fight intelligently and take advantage of the feats Expertise, Improved Disarm, and Improved Trip.

Character Level	Class Levels	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Ftr 1	+1	+2	+0	+0	10	Weapon and armor proficiency, bonus fighter feat
2	Ftr 1/Wiz 1	+1	+2	+0	+2	12	0 and 1st-level spells, Scribe Scroll
3	Ftr 1/Wiz 2	+2	+2	+0	+3	14	Feat
4	Ftr 1/Wiz 3	+2	+3	+1	+3	16	2nd-level spells, ability increase
5	Ftr 2/Wiz 3	+3	+4	+1	+3	21	Bonus fighter feat
6	Ftr 2/Wiz 4	+4	+4	+1	+4	23	Feat
7	Ftr 2/Wiz 5	+4	+4	+1	+4	25	3rd-level spells, bonus wizard feat
8	Ftr 3/Wiz 5	+5	+4	+2	+5	30	Ability increase
9	Ftr 3/Wiz 6	+6/+1	+5	+3	+6	32	Feat
10	Ftr 3/Wiz 7	+6/+1	+5	+3	+6	34	4th-level spells
11	Ftr 4/Wiz 7	+7/+2	+6	+3	+6	39	Bonus fighter feat, weapon specialization
12	Ftr 4/Wiz 8	+8/+3	+6	+3	+7	41	Feat, ability increase
13	Ftr 4/Wiz 9	+8/+3	+7	+4	+7	43	5th-level spells
14	Ftr 5/Wiz 9	+9/+4	+7	+4	+7	48	
15	Ftr 5/Wiz 10	+10/+5	+7	+4	+8	50	Bonus wizard feat, feat
16	Ftr 5/Wiz 11	+10/+5	+7	+4	+8	52	6th-level spells, ability increase
17	Ftr 6/Wiz 11	+11/+6/+1	+8	+5	+9	57	Bonus fighter feat
18	Ftr 6/Wiz 12	+12/+7/+2	+9	+6	+10	59	Feat
19	Ftr 6/Wiz 13	+12/+7/+2	+9	+6	+10	61	7th-level spells
20	Ftr 6/Wiz 14	+13/+8/+3	+9	+6	+11	63	Ability increase

CHARACTER CHOICES

Trackers focus on skills that maximize their effectiveness in the wild, particularly Wilderness Lore, which is a class skill for both the barbarian and ranger. Other favored skills include Intuit Direction, Search, and Spot.

Trackers, like scouts, often master archery feats like Point Blank Shot, Far Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, and Shot on the Run. Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, and (occasionally) Improved Two-Weapon Fighting are other favorites.

Character Level	Class Levels	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	Avg hp	Abilities Gained
1	Bbn 1	+1	+2	+0	+0	12	Rage, fast movement
2	Bbn 1/Rgr 1	+2	+4	+0	+0	17	Track, two-weapon fighting, favored enemy
3	Bbn 2/Rgr 1	+3	+5	+0	+0	23	Uncanny dodge (dex bonus), feat
4	Bbn 2/Rgr 2	+4	+6	+0	+0	28	Ability increase
5	Bbn 3/Rgr 2	+5	+6	+1	+1	34	
6	Bbn 3/Rgr 3	+6/+1	+6	+2	+2	39	Feat
7	Bbn 4/Rgr 3	+7/+2	+7	+2	+2	45	Rage 2/day
8	Bbn 4/Rgr 4	+8/+3	+8	+2	+2	50	1st-level spells, ability increase
9	Bbn 5/Rgr 4	+9/+4	+8	+2	+2	56	Uncanny dodge (can't be flanked), feat
10	Bbn 5/Rgr 5	+10/+5	+8	+2	+2	61	Second favored enemy
11	Bbn 6/Rgr 5	+11/+6/+1	+9	+3	+3	67	
12	Bbn 6/Rgr 6	+12/+7/+2	+10	+4	+4	72	Ability increase, feat
13	Bbn 7/Rgr 6	+13/+8/+3	+10	+4	+4	78	
14	Bbn 7/Rgr 7	+14/+9/+4	+10	+4	+4	83	
15	Bbn 8/Rgr 7	+15/+10/+5	+11	+4	+4	89	Rage 3/day, feat
16	Bbn 8/Rgr 8	+16/+11/+6/+1	+12	+4	+4	94	2nd-level spells, ability increase
17	Bbn 9/Rgr 8	+17/+12/+7/+2	+12	+5	+5	100	Feat
18	Bbn 9/Rgr 9	+18/+13/+8/+3	+12	+6	+6	105	
19	Bbn 10/Rgr 9	+19/+14/+9/+4	+13	+6	+6	111	Uncanny dodge (+1 vs. traps)
20	Bbn 10/Rgr10	+20/+15/+10/+5	+14	+6	+6	116	Third favored enemy, ability increase

Creature Codex:

by Kevin N. Haw • illustrated by Dennis Cramer

NOTHING TO FEAR

THE ECOLOGY OF THE FEYR

"So," hissed Baron Wolf. "Have you found the Lakite scum who strangles my citizens in the night?"

"My lord, the investigation continues."

"'Continues,' Blackmon?" roared the Baron, punctuating the outburst with a fist on his desk. "I'm not paying you to dally about and 'continue' your investigation. I'm paying you to get results, and get them quickly!"

The Baron's First Minister bit back a response and instead locked a granite smile on his face, saying: "While I am pursuing numerous avenues, my lord, there is someone I want you to meet. A specialist with an alternate theory about the rash of strangulations."

"Does he share your absurd views?"

"Does he want to find the murderer and not simply blame the Lakite minority in our city? Yes."

"Don't waste my time."

"Please, sir. You really should hear him out."

The Baron growled an obscenity that wasn't an explicit refusal, so Blackmon signaled a guard to lead his guest into the Baron's office.

"This, my lord, is Arnold Xavier Benedict. Previously, he was affiliated with the Naturalists' Guild of Elfmist City, but he recently moved to our town. He is an expert on a creature that might be responsible for the killings."

"Why, yes," rasped the elderly scholar, interrupting the First Minister. "I study the feyr, sir. Pleased to make your acquaintance."

The Baron looked down at the old man's outstretched hand, the contempt on his face showing how he felt about touching a commoner.

"Er," mumbled Lord Blackmon, standing between the pair and brushing aside the offending hand. "Just skip the preliminaries and tell him your theory about the murders."

"Of course. Well, to begin with, the feyr is a poorly documented creature at best—"

"Wait!" snapped the baron. "What poppycock are you selling? Why do you speak of fear as if it's a beast?"

"Because, in this case, that's exactly what it is."

Baron Wolf was rarely at a loss for words, yet the sage's reply had achieved exactly that. Benedict continued into the silence.

"You see, you confuse the two terms, Baron. As you said, 'fear' is an emotion, a power that grips us when the situation is dire. Some conquer it, some succumb to it, but even the bravest know its touch. A 'feyr,' on the other hand, is a creature made from that emotion, nourishing itself with the stuff. It's a parasite, a hunter, a killer. And Baron, it is something you don't want running about your city."

"Yes. I believe I've heard Blackmon suggest something like this in the past. What makes you think this is what's happening in Opaltown?"

"Well, I would be more sure if you would help by answering some questions. The Lakites began settling in your city two years ago. Refugees from a civil war, as I understand it."

"Regrettably," grumbled the Baron. "A curse they've been too, with their bizarre rituals and foreign ways. When they first arrived I imposed a curfew and gave them some land near the dump to keep them from soiling the rest of the town. When the murders began three weeks ago, the culprit was obviously Lakite, so I imposed greater restrictions. I'd hoped someone would come forward with the name of the killer, but they remained silent, showing no gratitude to those who gave them a new home."

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1. **In game terms,** whenever a spell is cast that directly manipulates emotion (spells like *fear, emotion,* or *cause fear*), there is a 1% chance per level of the spell that a feyr egg is produced. Thus, the *fear* spell cast by a wizard has a 4% chance of creating an egg.

   Note that charm spells do not meet this criterion as they change the target's attitude about the caster, not the target's entire emotional state.

2. **Feyr eggs are transparent,** jellylike beads. A character looking for one must make a Search check (DC 17) to find it. Anything less than ideal conditions (clean, level floor, good lighting, and so on) increases the difficulty of the check to DC 25 or more.

3. **Rough handling** (using a broom to sweep one up, picking one up with hands rather than tweezers, and so forth) has a 25% chance of destroying the eggs. Also, they must be nourished with the emotions of twenty or more fearful or angry people within 50 feet before 2d4 days pass or they spoil. As indicated in the text, prisons and asylums make ideal hatcheries.

4. **See the "fear immunity"** listing in the appendix to this article for information about how spells that inflict or counter fear affect a feyr.

5. **See the attached appendix** for statistics on the larval feyr.

6. **Except for absorbing emotions** from other creatures or eating their kin, which are rich in stored emotional energy, a feyr never takes any other form of nourishment.

7. **Once slain, a lesser** or greater feyr's body

"Intriguing," said the sage, "but I'm more interested in what skills these refugees brought with them."

"Well," said Lord Blackmon, "The Lakites are renowned for their glasswork and pottery. The taxes on that trade have been a boon for the city coffers. They also brought scores of wizards and priests, who freely contribute their skills for the city's good."

"Yes," nodded the scholar. "Magical activity, or rather magical accidents, are required for a feyr's egg to be created. Certain spells, especially those manipulating emotion, create a spark in the ether when they're miscast. Into that gap, through a process I'm still studying, a feyr egg sometimes forms."[1]

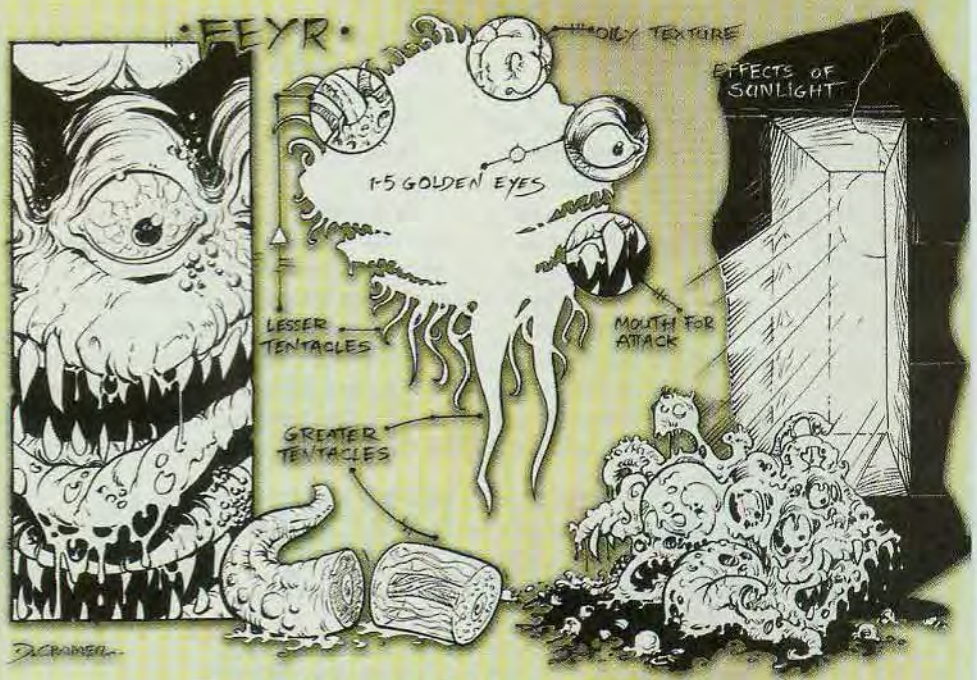
"So, an egg appears and plops to the floor of a wizard's workshop, eh?" laughed the Baron. "Now that's a miscast spell!"

"It's not like that, sir," corrected the scholar. "A feyr egg looks nothing like a hen's. They're tiny, smaller than a rice grain. The eggs are almost insubstantial, invisible in all but the brightest light. One ancient text calls them 'ghost eggs.'"[2]

"You said feyrs feed on emotion."

"Yes, my lord," interrupted Blackmon. "I've read works by Master Benedict and other scholars, and they indicate that magic only creates the egg. It is emotion that allows it to mature. The egg is very fragile, though. If harsh light hits it or if it isn't nourished within a few days, it withers away."[3]

"The First Minister is right, Baron," said the scholar. "If, however, a draft picks the egg up and blows it like a speck of dust, it might land in more fertile ground. Stuck to the eaves of a tenement building or in a shadowy corner of a poorhouse, it has a chance to mature. As long as there are anxious or fearful people nearby, the egg is nourished, and a larval feyr will hatch.[4] For years we had that problem in Elfmist City until the town council moved the weekly Mages' Bazaar to a location downwind of the asylum."



This is as close as anyone should ever want to get to a feyr.

"Larva? What do they look like?"

"They're relatively small, perhaps half a foot long, and they look like large worms with a forked tail. They're lightweight and can climb walls easily. Although they feed on fear, their ability to cause it in other animals is quite minimal.[5]

"Once they mature, they reach their adolescent form, commonly known as a 'lesser feyr.' The body changes shape to a sphere two feet in diameter while the forked tail becomes a pair of tentacles that it uses to crawl about. During this time the creature is ravenous, feeding on emotion both directly and by devouring its siblings.[6] The hunger is never sated, though. The beast haunts the night, seeking more victims to terrorize.

"From the description in Lord Blackmon's letter, I suspected immediately that it was a lesser feyr that your city watch slew in the Lakite Quarter two weeks ago."[7]

"What? One of these creatures was stalking our streets? Why didn't you tell me this, Blackmon!?" demanded the Baron.

"I tried to, sir, but you weren't interested. I believe your quip was, 'A monster attacking Lakites? Can we give it a medal?'"

The Baron shifted uneasily in his seat, then nodded at the scholar to continue.

"Actually, Lord Blackmon," interjected the scholar, "your letter neglected a detail I need to know. Was the beast attacking or fleeing when your men slew it?"

"The sergeant reported they spotted the creature on Griffon Lane, attacking a vagrant. The watchmen chased it to the market square, where they cornered and killed it."

"I suspected as much. A lesser feyr is not very intelligent. It will always attack, even when outnumbered. Perhaps it thinks more opponents means more victims to terrorize. The fact that this one

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deflates like a balloon, releasing noxious fumes over a 20-foot radius that linger for 1d6 rounds. Anyone inhaling the fumes must make a Will save (DC 15) or suffer the *fear* attack from the beast. The deflated skin of the feyr dissolves into dust 3d6 rounds after the beast's death. At the DM's discretion, the gas and skin might be of value in the fabrication of emotion controlling potions or items. Safely capturing the gas and preventing the decay of the skin, however, might prove difficult.

8. **See the appendix** to this article for details on the "budding" ability of the greater feyr.

9. **What Benedict says is partially true.** If a greater feyr chooses to migrate, it will split into two 8HD creatures (see appendix): one that stays behind and one that makes the trek to the new location. This is only done if the feyr believes the new location is a richer hunting ground. For simple procreation, a feyr uses the egg laying/smothering technique described below.

10. **To clarify, larval feyrs** only invoke terror in those they physically attack. Lesser feyrs do this but also cause it in anyone who witnesses them attacking a victim. Finally, greater feyrs have these abilities and can also manipulate victims from a distance while invisible or hidden. In addition to using its *emotion* ability to directly cause *fear*, a greater feyr uses it for tactical advantage. If pursued, it might incite *hate* in a band of onlookers in hopes of causing a fight to serve as a distraction while it escapes. Another

was fleeing indicates it was spawned from an adult or 'greater feyr.'"

"A greater feyr?" asked Baron Wolf.

"Yes. Much as larval feyrs feed upon each other to mature into adolescents, an adolescent feyr attacks others of its kind on sight. The victor matures into an adult or 'greater feyr.' Among its skills is the ability to peel off some of its life force, spawning a lesser feyr.[8] This might serve as an alternate technique for reproduction, but that's only a theory.[9] In most cases, however, the duplicate is expendable, created to perform a specific mission such as scouting a new hunting ground or herding prey towards the creature's lair."

"Or decoying my watchmen away from the adult," grumbled the baron.

"I'm afraid that's the logical conclusion, sir."

"The more I hear of this creature, the more formidable it appears. Does it have any other skills we should know about?"

"Well, a few, but I'm not sure how important—"

"Tell the Baron about the invisibility," interrupted Blackmon.

"Er, yes. The adult's ability to turn invisible is well documented, as is its immunity to sunlight. Lesser feyrs are destroyed by the direct light of the sun. The adult is much tougher in combat than the adolescent creature. Also, it can manipulate a victim's emotions in subtle ways.[10] The most disturbing aspect, though, is its intelligence. To reach adulthood, the beast has absorbed phenomenal amounts of emotion, and it knows the nature of fear quite well. It begins manipulating events in the community to create even more nourishment for itself."

"Nourishment? You mean fear."

"Well, yes. But I'm unsure if—"

"How?"

"Well, theoretically, a greater feyr can take a familiar, a person to serve as its agent. It herds a likely candidate to its lair and then holds the wretch captive.[11] It crawls on top of the victim, crushing and smothering him, and at the last moment allows him a few desperate breaths. This continues for several days as the feyr uses its power of despair to destroy the victim's will. If he survives the process, the familiar is a complete slave, willing to do anything the feyr commands. He serves as the eyes and hands of his master, performing tasks the feyr is physically unable to do.[12]

THE CREATURE IS RAVENOUS, FEEDING ON EMOTION BOTH DIRECTLY AND BY DEVOURING ITS SIBLINGS.

"Of course," said the scholar, "it's only a theory. I've never been able to prove—"

"It would explain the chalk messages, though, Baron," Lord Blackmon said.

"Messages?" asked the scholar.

"Yes," answered Blackmon. "Near two of the murder scenes and at several other locations, we have found taunting messages chalked on walls. Written in Lakite and very incendiary."

"'Vengeance is ours,'" quoted the baron gloomily.

"Lakite messages ..." mused the scholar, rubbing his chin. "And none of the victims were Lakite?"

"Out of eight murders, no, not one."

"If a Lakite were angry at the mainstream population of the city, you'd think he'd go after at least a few of his fellows that were cooperating with the non-Lakites. View them as traitors, you know," said Blackmon. "These messages and murders, on the other hand, sound much more like the work of a feyr and its familiar."

"Wait!" demanded the baron. "Aren't we jumping to conclusions here? Benedict says it's only a theory. How do you know these familiars exist?"

"Although he is skilled," said Blackmon, "Master Benedict is not the only scholar to study these beasts. I found a text by a Master Thadeus that claimed there have been several cases over the past century. In the worst, a greater feyr played the factions of King Fallon the True's sons against each other during the War of Succession thirty years ago. The beast lived in the capital and ordered its familiar, the town simpleton, to kidnap the wife of one of Prince Atkin's retainers. He strangled the poor woman and left the body on the doorstep of Prince Lethy's chief lieutenant. By the time the familiar was interrogated and the feyr was slain a month later, rioting had killed hundreds and burnt a quarter of the city to the ground."[13]

"This theory sounds plausible to me," conceded the baron. "But if there's a familiar doing a feyr's bidding here, did he perform all these murders simply to cause trouble between my people and the Lakites?"

"That would be part of it," answered Benedict. "However, Thadeus believed it would be the creature itself, not a familiar, that committed the killings. Lord Blackmon's letter indicated that although the victims were all suffocated, there were no bruises around the throat. I would suspect that they were all smothered, not strangled."

"Why?"

"Well, first, the feyr gets more nourishment that way. Being slowly smothered by the monster would be

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favored tactic is to use *despair* on a victim it is about to attack to make an ambush more successful.

11. **A greater feyr makes its lair** in an abandoned warehouse, sewer, or a similar locale. If it has a familiar through whom it can negotiate (see below), it strikes a bargain with any other monsters nearby. In exchange for the feyr making victims easier targets with its *emotion* ability, its partners slay the victim slowly, providing extra nourishment for the feyr. Cases of feyrs cooperating with wererats and vampires have been recorded, but the DM should feel free to use any intelligent predator as an ally.

    Should the PCs find the lair of a greater feyr, the DM should roll percentile dice. On a 01-50, there are 2d4 1st-level commoners held captive. On 51-70, there are 2d4 1st-level commoners and also an adventurer of comparable level to the PCs. Finally, on 71-00, no living victims are found. Captives are kept bound and gagged by the familiar, but they are not fed. Instead, the feyr derives greater and greater levels of terror from the victims as they starve.

12. **The feyr usually chooses the village idiot** or some other mentally deficient person to be its familiar. (See "make familiar" in the appendix at the end of this article.) Only rarely will someone be able to break free of the feyr's control. Should that happen, though, the poor soul's warnings about the feyr are likely dismissed as the ravings of a weak-minded lunatic.

13. **In addition to those techniques** spelled out in

incredibly terrifying for the victim. Second, having direct physical contact might allow it to leech more emotion from its prey.[14]

"There's a third reason, although I hesitate to mention it because it is also theoretical."

"These beasts seem more theory than fact," growled the Baron.

"I did say it was a poorly documented creature," said Benedict defensively.

"Go ahead."

"Well, I've described how a misfired spell from a mage might create a feyr egg. The feyr's ability to generate fear is very similar to an emotion spell. If the beast were able to force a victim to reach an incredible level of terror—an epiphany of fear as it were—it is possible that dozens of eggs would be generated."[15]

"Ye gods!" murmured the baron. "Every one of the murders—"

"Directly upwind of the Lakite quarter," finished Blackmon, nodding. "It's using the place as a hatchery. Unless we act soon, we'll be facing an infestation. When that happens, the chaos in the capital during the War of Succession will look like nothing."

The baron was thoughtful for a moment, then rose from his desk.

"Well, thank you for your counsel, Benedict," the baron said, taking the sage's hand. "I'm still not completely convinced, but you have done us a great service nonetheless. My exchequer will see that some silver is delivered to your residence in the morning. Now, though, it is late, and Lord Blackmon and I must confer on the things you have told us."

The sage nodded politely and left, leaving the other two alone. As the door closed, he heard an argument begin between the two men, but he kept walking.

On the street in front of the palace, the sage scampered briskly through the early evening crowd. He was late.

A quick left turn and two rights found him alone in a trash-strewn alley, waiting.

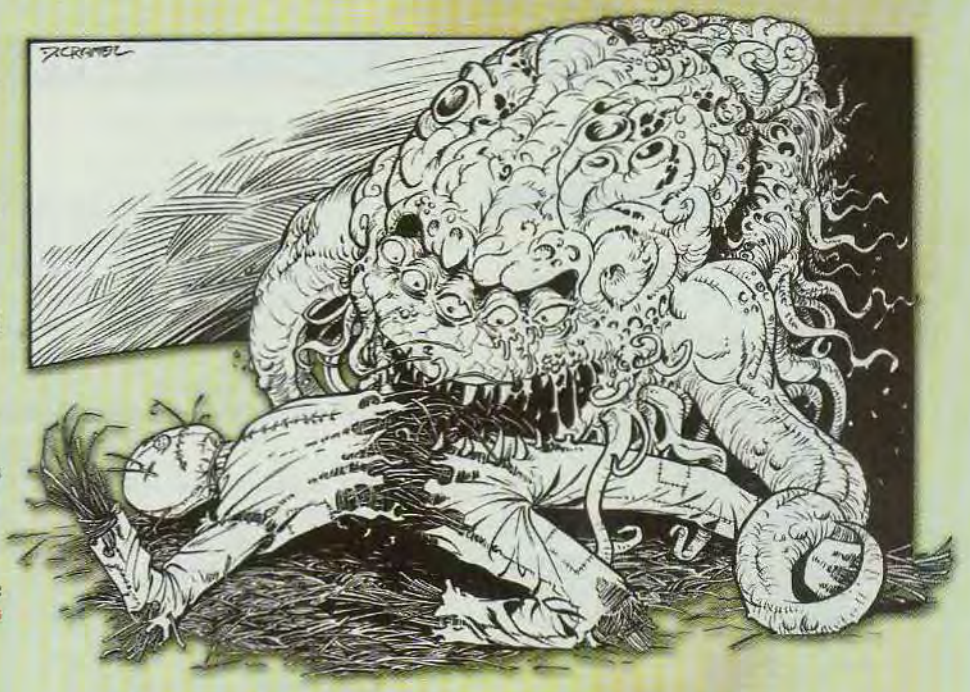
You did poorly, hissed a voice inside his head. He spun to see the faint outline of the feyr resolving itself against the alley's entrance, cutting off his escape. He fought down a scream as he felt tendrils of the creature's anger brush the edges of his mind. Terrified, the old man threw himself to the filthy cobblestones and began to sob.

Because of you they now know more about me. You will be punished.

"No!" the scholar begged in a hoarse whisper. "Please don't! I told them nothing useful, just repeated what the Baron's man already knew from his research! Don't blame me because Blackmon's clever! Besides, fear of you will cause great panic!"

There was a moment of complete silence and then the scholar gasped with relief as he felt the creature withdraw from his mind.

You are right about Blackmon. He is indeed clever, too level-headed. I will not kill you ... yet. Instead, I have a task for you, slave.



A single slow death by smothering can nourish the feyr for a week or more.

A torrent of images and emotions flooded the old man's mind, unspoken commands from the feyr. The intensity hit him like a lightning bolt, and he felt himself slip into a seizure. When the agony finally passed, he sensed his master had left the alley but was still nearby. The scholar rose from the ground and stumbled into the street.

It would be a long night: preparing the note in Lakite, waiting for the feyr to incapacitate or distract the guards, figuring out which room in Lord Blackmon's villa was used as the nursery for his two daughters. But before all that there was one errand to run, and he feared what his master would do if he didn't get it done in time.

Where was he going to find a meat cleaver at this hour of the night?

Turn the page to face the new fear ...

Benedict's lecture, feyrs use a number of other tactics to wreck havoc. One favored ploy is to lurk nearby when its familiar plants false evidence, using the *hate* option of its *emotion* ability on those who discover the evidence to whip them into a frenzy. It might also lurk near funerals of victims and invoke either *despair* or *hate* to further its schemes. Finally, a feyr might attack civic leaders, either indirectly (having its familiar uncover or fabricate evidence to discredit the victim) or directly (by manipulating emotions to drive the leader to self-destructive behavior). By neutralizing the moral leadership of a community, a feyr hopes to make the inhabitants easier pickings for its later attacks.

14. **See the appendix** for details of the greater feyr's "smother" attack.

15. **If a feyr kills a victim** by smothering while simultaneously attacking it with the *fear* option of its *emotion* power, 4d6 feyr eggs are created. However, due to the large amount of nourishment present during their creation, they are much hardier specimens than those formed by simple spell miscasting. Specifically, they are immune to the effects of sunlight, are less susceptible to damage (treat them as glass beads for hardness, hit points, handling, and saving throws), and remain viable for six months without nourishment.

APPENDIX: THE GREATER FEYR, LESSER FEYR, AND LARVAL FEYR

The feyr (pronounced "fear") is a magic parasite, nourished by negative emotions from humans and other humanoid races.

LARVAL FEYR

Diminutive Aberration

Hit Dice	½d8-1 (1 hp)
Initiative	+5 (Dex)
Speed	15 ft., climb 10 ft.
AC	19 (+4 size, +5 Dex)
Attacks	Bite, -4 melee
Damage	Bite 1d3-4
Face/Reach	1 ft. by 1 ft./1 ft.
Special Attacks	*Cause fear*
Special Qualities	Darkvision (30 ft.), fear immunity, light sensitivity
Saves	Fort -1, Ref +5, Will -2
Abilities	Str 3, Dex 20, Con 9, Int 2, Wis 2, Cha 11
Skills	Climb +7, Hide +8
Feats	–

Climate/Terrain Urban
Organization Swarm (1d20)
Challenge Rating 1/4
Treasure None
Alignment Always neutral
Advancement Range 1-2 HD (Tiny)

Larval feyrs resemble 6-inch long, translucent maggots with a single eye and forked tail. They are spawned by concentrations of magical activity and negative emotions such as rage, sadness, and terror. Cities with a wizard's quarter or cluster of temples adjacent to a prison, asylum, or ghetto are prime spawning grounds for the beasts, which lurk in the shadows and drop on victims from above. Eventually, they mature into lesser feyrs and begin wandering the streets in search of victims to terrorize.

Combat

A larval feyr clings to a wall or ceiling, avoiding sunlight. If four or more are present, they drop from their perches on a lone individual (usually a child or elderly person) and attack. After the attack, all the larvae flee the scene and seek new perches from which to hunt.

Fear Immunity (Ex): Larval feyrs are immune to magical and nonmagical fear. Emotion controlling magic normally has no effect, but spells that cause or counter fear respectively act as *cure* spells or *inflict* spells of the equivalent level. Thus *fear* cast by a wizard is equivalent to *cure critical wounds*. Conversely, a spell that counters fear injures the feyr in a similar manner. (A 1st-level *remove fear* acts as *inflict light wounds*.)

Cause Fear (Sp): Any creature attacked by a larval feyr must make a Will save (DC 10) or be subject to the effects of a *cause fear* spell as though cast by a 1st–level sorcerer.

Sunlight Sensitivity: A larval feyr must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) every round it is exposed to direct sunlight or immediately die. With a successful save, it suffers 1d6 damage.

LESSER FEYR

Small Aberration

Hit Dice	3d8+6 (19 hp)
Initiative	+1 (Dex)
Speed	40 ft.
AC	18 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +6 natural)
Attacks	Bite, +2 melee; tentacle slam, -3 melee
Damage	Bite 1d6; tentacle slam 1d3
Face/Reach	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks	*Fear*
Special Qualities	Darkvision (30 ft.), fear immunity, light sensitivity
Saves	Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +1
Abilities	Str 10, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 5, Wis 5, Cha 16
Skills	Climb +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +7
Feats	–

Climate/Terrain Urban
Organization Loose band (1d4)
Challenge Rating 2
Treasure None
Alignment Always chaotic evil
Advancement Range 4-7 HD (Medium-size), 8-10 HD (Medium-size)

Lesser feyrs have lumpy, roughly spherical bodies about a foot wide, with two thick 2-foot-long tentacles that serve as legs. They have three gold and copper eyes set just above very impressive jaws.

Combat

Lesser feyrs lurk quietly in darkened alleys or stairwells, but once they attack a victim, they show no restraint. They will chase a fleeing victim down the street and not break off the pursuit, even if confronted with superior odds or if their prey flees into full sunlight. (See "light sensitivity," below.)

Fear Immunity (Ex): Lesser feyrs are immune to magical and nonmagical fear. Emotion controlling magic normally has no effect, but spells that cause or counter fear respectively act as *cure* spells or *inflict* spells of the equivalent level. Thus *fear* cast by a wizard is equivalent to *cure critical wounds*. Conversely, a spell that counters fear injures the feyr in a similar manner. (A 1st level *remove fear* acts as *inflict light wounds*.)

Fear (Sp): Any creature attacked by a lesser feyr must make a Will save (DC 14) or be subject to the effects of a *fear* spell as though cast by an 8th-level sorcerer. Additionally, anyone witnessing a lesser feyr attack must make a Will save (DC 14) or be subject to the effects of a *fear* spell as though cast by an 8th-level sorcerer.

Sunlight Sensitivity: A lesser feyr must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) every round it is exposed to direct sunlight or immediately die. With a successful save, it suffers 1d6 damage.

Greater feyrs have lumpy, roughly spherical bodies often wider than a man is tall. Two massive, 8-foot-long tentacles serve as legs and arms, and a multitude of lesser tentacles help to grapple and subdue prey. The greater feyr has five eyes and four mouths. The mouths are used for combat and terrorizing victims, not for feeding, as the feyr feeds exclusively on the emotion of its victims and requires no physical nourishment.

Greater feyrs leave their birthplace and seek out new homes, often migrating for hundreds of miles over several weeks. They settle in any place with an adequate concentration of emotional energy to nourish them, most often in another urban area, but greater feyrs have even been known to follow armies across a continent, knowing them to provide a steady supply of terror and despair.

Combat

The greater feyr is more intelligent and cunning than its previous forms. It prefers to work from afar, avoiding combat except when the odds are in its favor.

Fear Immunity (Su): Greater feyrs are immune to magical and nonmagical fear. Emotion controlling magic normally has no effect, but spells that cause or counter fear respectively act as *cure* spells or *inflict* spells of the equivalent level. Thus *fear* cast by a wizard is equivalent to *cure critical wounds*. Conversely, a spell that counters fear injures the feyr in a similar manner. (A 1st-level *remove fear* acts as *inflict light wounds*.)

***Fear* (Sp):** Any creature attacked by a greater feyr must make a Will save (DC 20) or be subject to the effects of a *fear* spell as though cast by a 14th-level sorcerer. Additionally, anyone witnessing a lesser feyr attack must also make a Will save (DC 20) or be subject to the effects of a *fear* spell as though cast by a 14th-level sorcerer.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, the greater feyr must hit a Medium-size or smaller opponent with two tentacle slams in the same round. If it gets a hold in this fashion, it deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. Once a victim has been grappled, the feyr can initiate its smother attack.

***Improved Invisibility* (Sp):** A greater feyr gains the benefits of *improved invisibility* at will.

Smother (Ex): A greater feyr can smother a grappled victim. The victim being smothered can hold her breath for a number of rounds equal to double her Constitution. After this time, the victim must make a Constitution check (DC 10) every round in order to continue holding her breath. Each round the DC increases by 1. When the victim fails her Constitution check, she begins to suffocate. In the first round she falls unconscious (0 hp). In the following round, she drops to -1 hit points and is dying. In the third round, she dies. Victims of greater than animal intelligence killed by smothering grant the greater feyr temporary hit points equal to 4 x the victim's HD. The temporary hit points last for a number of hours equal to the victim's Constitution. A greater feyr cannot move or attack while smothering.

***Emotion* (Sp):** Five times a day, greater feyrs have the innate ability to manipulate creatures' emotions as the arcane spell *emotion*, although they can exercise only the *despair*, *fear*, *hate*, or *rage* options. The ability has a range of 150 feet and affects all creatures in a 15-foot radius. Victims must make a Will save (DC 20) to resist the effects.

Budding (Ex): A greater feyr can split off some of its life force to create one or more feyrs under the parent's control. Usually these offspring are used for specific, short-term missions such as reconnaissance or to decoy pursuers. The feyr can divide its Hit Dice as desired between itself and its offspring, as long as the smaller creature receives at least 4 Hit Dice and the parent retains more Hit Dice than any of the offspring. It takes 2 rounds for the split to occur, during which time the feyr can perform no other action and can not use its power of *improved invisibility*. After the split, roll hit points for the new creature, deducting that total from the larger creature. For game purposes, treat any feyr with 4-6 Hit Dice as lesser feyrs and 7-10 Hit Dice as greater feyrs.

Once spawned, the other feyrs immediately leave at their maximum movement to perform their assigned mission. The parent maintains a telepathic link with the smaller creatures, commanding them and seeing what they see.

If the smaller feyrs survive the mission, they return to their parent and are devoured, restoring the feyr to its original Hit Dice. Should the offspring perish, the feyr hunts to smother victims. It recovers 1 Hit Die for each victim of greater than animal intelligence that it kills by smothering. Roll hit points for each recovered Hit Die.

Make Familiar (Su): A greater feyr can make a creature its familiar by terrorizing it for 2d4 days. The feyr must successfully use the *despair* power of its *emotion* ability on the victim three times each day and suffocate the victim to unconsciousness at least once each day. At the end of this time, it uses its Intimidate skill on the victim. The victim must then make a Will save with a DC equal to the greater feyr's Intimidate check result. A successful save indicates the target has broken free of the feyr's control and is immune to further attempts to be made into that feyr's familiar. Failure indicates that the victim has become the feyr's familiar.

GREATER FEYR

Large Aberration

Hit Dice	16d8+64 (160 hp)
Initiative	+5 (Dex)
Speed	30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)
AC	22 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +12 natural)
Attacks	4 bites +16 melee; 2 tentacle slams, +14/+9/+4 melee
Damage	4 bites 2d6+4, 2 tentacle slams 1d6+2
Face/Reach	5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks	*Emotion*, *fear*, improved grab, smother
Special Qualities	Budding, darkvision (60 ft.), fear immunity, *improved invisibility*, make familiar, SR 20
Saves	Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +12
Abilities	Str 19, Dex 13, Con 19, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 22
Skills	Hide +6, Intimidate +25, Listen +13, Sense Motive +18, Spot +13
Feats	Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Multiattack

Climate/Terrain Urban
Organization Solitary
Challenge Rating 14
Treasure Standard
Alignment Always chaotic evil
Advancement Range 17-32 HD (Huge)

The feyr maintains a telepathic link with the familiar with a range of 4 miles. If a distance greater than 4 miles separates the feyr from its familiar, the link is broken and the target cannot be made a familiar by that feyr again. Nothing else short of a *limited wish*, *wish*, or *miracle* spell can break this bond.

The greater feyr can see and hear everything that the familiar does, and it can command and converse with the familiar at will. The feyr gains knowledge of all languages at the same level of fluency as the familiar. If commanded to take actions contrary to her nature, the familiar can make a Will save with a DC equal to a new Intimidate check made by the feyr plus a bonus of +1 to +4, depending on the type of action required. Obviously self-destructive orders are not carried out and break the feyr's control. A successful save indicates the target has broken free of the feyr's control and cannot be made into a familiar again.

A greater feyr can have only one familiar at a time.

Forgotten Realms 2000
SURVIVAL GUIDE

Your primer to the new Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting

by Sean K Reynolds

ARTEMIS ENTRERI
MATT WILSON

With the introduction of the new edition of Dungeons & Dragons, an entire world of roleplayers are making the switch to the best RPG ever crafted. The changes wrought with the new edition leave players and DMs of the Forgotten Realms faced with a multitude of decisions regarding character creation, domains for deities, and other essential components.

In order to allow all of you to adventure in the Forgotten Realms using the new D&D rules, we're releasing this "survival guide" of information that will get you through to the release of the campaign setting in June.

Are all the changes that will befall Toril hinted at below? Not at all, but this information will allow you to play in the Forgotten Realms for the next few months.

In the coming months, we'll reveal some of the other exciting changes we've got underway. You'll be able to see glimpses of those changes in the pages of *Dragon Magazine*, through the RPGA, and on the website.

Until Swords Part,
Jim Butler, Brand Manager
Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting

MAGIC ITEMS

The Forgotten Realms campaign setting is well-known for its magic, so here are some of the more popular magic items from Myth Drannor and other regions. Seeing how we converted these items should help you do the same for the other items your characters wield until you can get your hands on the new campaign setting book.

Blueglow moss: *Blueglow moss* is a magic plant growth, powered by the mythal and imbued with many healing abilities. At night it glows with blue *faerie fire*, and a creature that rests upon a bed of *blueglow moss* is cured of 1d4 points of damage for every continuous hour spent there. If 6 or more continuous hours are spent upon the moss bed, the following effects occur:

- a *remove disease* spell
- the use of *darkvision* at will, ending when the creature leaves the mythal
- the ability to *levitate self* at will (naked self only after first 6-hour interval, increasing by 25 pounds per interval to a maximum of 1,000 pounds), ending when the creature leaves the mythal
- use of *detect poison* at will, plus an awareness of the body to immediately recognize attacks, infestations, diseases, or other affronts to the body when they might otherwise be concealed (such as anaesthetic attacks by certain blood-draining creatures), ending when the creature leaves the mythal
- +2 resistance bonus to saving throws against *petrification* and *polymorph* effects, ending when the creature leaves the mythal
- a *regenerate* spell (requires 12 hours of exposure, cumulative but with no more than 1 full day in-between exposures).

Blueglow moss cannot survive outside of a mythal and cannot be created independent of spells that create a mythal.

Dove's Harp: This magic item's original name has been lost, and its current name derives from Dove Falconhand, who owns such a harp. This is a masterwork harp, triangular in shape, with 20-36 strings. When it is played, all within 20 feet of the harp are temporarily cured of any insanity (as if a *greater restoration* were in effect) and are protected by a *calm emotions* spell. Those who listen to it for 2 rounds or more receive the benefits of *cure light wounds* spell as if cast by a 1st-level cleric, although this power can only affect a being once every tenday. While its magic is being invoked, the harp and harpist radiate light. Use of the harp requires the Perform (harp) skill and is a standard action.

Caster Level: 9th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *calm emotions, greater restoration, healing circle, light;* ***Market Price:*** 45,000 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 22,500 gp + 1,800 XP

Fanged Mask: This half-mask is like one wears to a masquerade party, but the bottom edge has numerous sharp-looking catlike teeth. The wearer can use the mask to bite in combat for 1d4 points of damage (not in addition to normal bite damage), and the mask is +1 weapon. A bitten creature must make a Fortitude save (DC 13) or be stunned for 1 round.

Caster Level: 3rd; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *spiritual weapon;* ***Market Price:*** 4,302 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 2,151 gp + 172 XP.

Harper Pin: *Harper pins* are fashioned from silver that has been enchanted to be as hard as adamantine (hardness 20, 9 hit points, +5 on all saving throws). Their wearer is protected by the following constant effects: immune to *magic missiles, nondetection, protection from elements (electricity), undetectable alignment,* and a +5 resistance bonus to saves against mind-influencing effects. Some *harper pins* turn black and make discordant jangling sounds when worn by evil beings.

Caster Level: 5th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *nondetection, protection from elements, resistance, shield, undetectable alignment* (plus *detect evil* and *ghost sound* for harper pins that respond to an evil bearer); ***Market Price:*** 75,750 gp (78,750 gp for the

HADHRUNE (SHADE FORM)
SAM WOOD

RACES

Some of the races in the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting differ from those in the *Player's Handbook* and other core D&D sources. Listed below are the ability score modifiers of the standard player character races. Note that these races have additional abilities beyond their ability scores; these will be revealed in the campaign setting book.

Human: as *Player's Handbook* human.
Dwarf, gold: +2 Constitution, -2 Dexterity.
Dwarf, shield: as *Player's Handbook* dwarf.
Elf, drow: +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, +2 Charisma, 120 ft. darkvision and spell resistance as per the *Monster Manual.*
Elf, moon: as *Player's Handbook* elf.
Elf, sun: -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence.
Elf, wild: +2 Dexterity, -2 Intelligence.
Elf, wood: +2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, -2 Intelligence, -2 Charisma.
Gnome, rock: as *Player's Handbook* gnome.
Half-elf: as *Player's Handbook* half-elf (half-drow get 60 ft. darkvision instead of low-light vision).
Half-orc: as *Player's Handbook* half-orc.
Halfling, lightfoot: as *Player's Handbook* halfling.

DEITIES

The new *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* has over thirty new domains tailored for the deities of Faerûn. The details of those domains and their granted powers are too lengthy to go into here (and we don't want to spoil the surprise), but what follows are the living deities from the *Faiths & Avatars* trilogy (plus the entire orc pantheon) and their *Player's Handbook* domains. Some of them look pretty skimpy, but that's generally because there are more Forgotten Realms domains that aren't mentioned here. If you're unhappy with the domain choices for your favorite deity, don't worry, there's plenty of good stuff in the campaign setting book.

Abbathor: Evil, Luck, Trickery
Aerdrie Faenya: Air, Animal, Chaos, Good
Akadi: Air, Travel, Trickery
Angharradh: Chaos, Good, Plant, Protection
Anhur: Chaos, Good, Strength, War
Arvoreen: Good, Law, Protection, War
Auril: Air, Evil, Water
Azuth: Knowledge, Law, Magic
Baervan Wildwanderer: Animal, Good, Plant, Travel
Bahgtru: Chaos, Evil, Strength
Baravar Cloakshadow: Good, Protection, Trickery
Berronar Truesilver: Good, Healing, Law, Protection,
Beshaba: Chaos, Evil, Luck, Trickery
Brandobaris: Luck, Travel, Trickery
Calladuran Smoothhands: Earth

Chauntea: Animal, Earth, Good, Plant, Protection
Clangeddin Silverbeard: Good, Law, Strength, War
Corellon Larethian: Chaos, Good, Protection, War
Cyric: Chaos, Destruction, Evil, Trickery
Cyrrollalee: Good, Law
Deep Duerra: Evil, Law
Deep Sashelas: Chaos, Good, Knowledge, Magic, Water
Deneir: Good, Knowledge
Dugmaren Brightmantle: Chaos, Good, Knowledge
Dumathoin: Earth, Knowledge, Protection,
Eilistraee: Chaos, Good
Eldath: Good, Plant, Protection, Water
Erevan Ilesere: Chaos, Luck, Trickery
Eshowdow: Chaos, Evil, Destruction
Fenmarel Mestarine: Animal, Chaos, Plant,Travel
Finder Wyvernspur: Chaos
Flandal Steelskin: Good
Gaerdal Ironhand: Good, Law, Protection, War
Garagos: Chaos, Destruction, Strength, War
Gargauth: Evil, Law, Trickery
Garl Glittergold: Good, Protection, Trickery
Geb: Earth, Protection
Ghaunadaur: Chaos, Evil
Gond: Earth, Fire, Knowledge
Gorm Gulthyn: Good, Law, Protection, War
Grumbar: Earth
Gruumsh: Chaos, Evil, Strength, War
Gwaeron Windstrom: Animal, Good, Knowledge, Plant, Travel
Haela Brightaxe: Chaos, Good, Luck, War
Hanali Celanil: Chaos, Good
Hathor: Good
Helm: Law, Protection, Strength
Hoar: Law, Travel
Horus-Re: Good, Law, Sun
Ilmater: Good, Healing, Law, Strength,
Ilneval: Evil, Destruction, War
Isis: Good, Magic, Water,
Istishia: Destruction, Travel, Water
Jergal: Death, Law

Kelemvor: Death, Law, Protection, Travel,
Kiaransalee: Chaos, Evil
Kossuth: Destruction, Fire
Labelas Enoreth: Chaos, Good, Knowledge
Laduger: Evil, Law, Protection, Magic

CONTINUED ON PAGE 106

version that reacts to an evil bearer); ***Cost to Create:*** 37,875 gp + 3,030 XP (39,375 gp + 3,150 XP).

Jump Dagger: When grasped, this *+1 dagger* acts as a *ring of feather falling*, and also allows the one holding it to make one *jump* (useable every other round). If the dagger touched to an object weighing 5 pounds or less, the wielder can use the weapon's *jump* power to gently propel the item up to 30 feet in any direction (usually used to pass weapons, keys, or valuables to someone else). If this power is used against an object held by a creature, consider the attack a Strike a Weapon action, and if successful have the targeted object's owner make a Will save (DC 11) to avoid the effect; if the save is failed the creature can make a Strength check (DC 15) to grab or hold onto the item, preventing its loss.
Caster Level: 5th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *jump, mage hand;* ***Market Price:*** 16,052 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 8,026 gp + 3,210 XP.

Mirror Mask: This mask is circular, with dark lines radiating outward from the point between the eyes. The wearer gains a +5 resistance bonus to all saves against gaze attacks and spells that work through sight (such as *flare*, pattern spells, a vampire's *domination* ability, and so on). Furthermore, any creature that views the wearer's face while the mask is worn sees their own face rather than the wearer's.
Caster Level: 5th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *change self, resistance;* ***Market Price:*** 8,759 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 4,379 gp + 350 XP.

Purple Dragon Ring: This item is a brass ring engraved with Purple Dragon symbol of the Obarskyr royal family. The wearer can use it to create *light* once per round, either on the ring or up to 40 feet away; this effect lasts 10 minutes, and (unlike the *light* cantrip) cannot be dispelled by the ring. Its second power is a combined *detect magic* and *detect poison* power activated by command word (usually inscribed on the inside of the ring, and typically "Bonthar"); when this power is activated and the ring touched to a food or drink, it glows an eerie gold-green if the substance is poisonous and a bright blue if it is enchanted (including

potions). The ring cannot identify what sort of poison or magic is present.

These rings are normally found only in the hands of the Purple Dragons of Cormyr (of lionar rank or higher), the royal family of that nation, or by individuals performing special missions on behalf of the crown. The Purple Dragons use them to protect the royal family from assassination attempts by poison, and also to verify that merchants claiming the sale of magic potions are not being fraudulent. Over four thousand of these rings are known to have been made, and there are said to be stores of them in all three of Cormyr's major cities in case many are needed in an emergency. It is likely that there are rings with similar functions in circulation, created for nobles or merchants fearing poison or trickery.

Caster Level: 1st; ***Prerequisites:*** Forge Ring, *detect magic, detect poison, light;* ***Market Price:*** 2,125 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 1062 gp + 85 XP.

Ring of Dragons: These brass rings are created by the Cult of the Dragon and are greatly prized by the higher tiers of its organization. There are about seventy in existence; some look like snakes or dragons biting their own tails. The wearer can use the following abilities:

- verbally or telepathically communicate with any true dragon
- cast a figment of a dragon (as *silent image*) once per day within 60 feet of himself; the dragon resembles any dragon the user has personally seen (this power is typically used as a recognition symbol or a diversion)
- transmit a call to a named dracolich or evil dragon; the target knows the wearer's location and can home in on the call if they choose to respond, although there is no compulsion to do so (the call remains active until the ring is removed, the wearer dismisses the call, or the wearer dies)

Caster Level: 15th; ***Prerequisites:*** Forge Ring, *detect thoughts, sending, silent image, tongues;* ***Market Price:*** 100,000 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 50,000 gp + 4,000 XP.

Singing Sword: These *+1 silver greatswords* are believed to have been created for use by the Harpers. When drawn, they sing loudly and constantly, although the singing can be countered normally by a skilled bard, a *silence* spell, and so on. As long as the bearer can hear the sword's song, she gains a +3 morale bonus to hit and damage. Furthermore, she gains a +5 morale bonus to saves against mind-affecting spells and effects (and the only sort of *emotion* spell that can affect the wielder is rage). The sword's song quells shriekers, negates the song effects of harpies within 100 feet, and once per day can act as an *enthrall* spell to creatures with 2 or fewer Hit Dice (and affecting them with a *suggestion* spell if they fail a second saving throw). Some of these weapons are intelligent and aligned chaotic good.

Caster Level: 9th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bless, enthrall, suggestion,* creator must have 3 ranks of Perform (the chaotic good intelligent singing swords must be created by a being of that alignment); ***Market Price:*** 9,585 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 4,792 gp + 383 XP.

Spectral Blade: Fashioned from the bone of a creature that died violently, this appears to be just a sword hilt made of bone. When grasped by a creature, a "blade" of light that seems to be constructed of *faerie fire* appears. The blade has no attack bonus but an wielder attacking with it requires a successful touch attack; any target struck is affected by a *chill touch* spell. Different varieties of *spectral blades* have been created to resemble many different bladed weapons, from daggers to greatswords.

Caster Level: 5th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *chill touch;* ***Market Price:*** 10,000 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 5,000 gp + 250 XP.

Winged Mask: The edges of this full-face mask are made to resemble feathers or wings. The wearer can *fly* at will, but glows with white light whenever this ability is used. The mask can only carry the wearer and 50 pounds of other material. If grappled or weighted down in mid-flight, the wearer is borne to the ground under the effects of a *feather fall* spell.

Caster Level: 5th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *feather fall, fly, light;* ***Market Price:*** 36,000 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 18,000 gp + 1,440 XP.

Skull Mask: This mask is shaped like a skull and painted black around the eyes. When worn, the wearer's visage transforms to look like an actual skull. The wearer gains a +4 morale bonus to saving throws against disease, fear effects, and paralysis, and is immune to life draining attacks. The wearer immediately recognizes any creature seen as alive, dead, undead, or inanimate (never alive, such as a lifelike statue). Undead are drawn to the wearer of a skull mask, attacking that creature in preference to all others.

Caster Level: 5th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Wondrous Item, *deathwatch, detect undead, negative energy protection, remove fear;* ***Market Price:*** 50,000 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 25,000 gp + 2,000 XP.

Staff of Night: This staff of black wood is carved with runes of darkness, stars, and night, with one resembling an umber hulk. The staff has the following powers:

- immunity to the confusing gaze power of umber hulks (no charges)
- *darkvision*

MULTICLASSING

Monks and paladins have the restriction that if they ever take a level in another class, they cannot return to the path of the monk or paladin. On Toril, there are some monk and paladin orders that break this restriction, allowing them to gain levels in a particular class without sacrificing the ability to return. A few examples of these groups, and their available multiclassing options, are listed in the sidebar to the right:

Monk of Ilmater: cleric of Ilmater
Halfling Monk: fighter or rogue
Monks of the Yellow Rose: ranger
Paladin of Chauntea: cleric of Chauntea
Paladin of Helm: cleric of Helm, fighter
Paladin of Ilmater: cleric of Ilmater
Paladin of Lathander: cleric of Lathander
Paladin of Moradin: cleric of Moradin, fighter
Paladin of Torm: any one other class
Paladin of Tyr: cleric of Tyr, fighter
Paladin of Yondalla: monk

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Lathander: Good, Protection, Strength, Sun
Lliira: Chaos, Good
Lolth: Chaos, Evil

Loviatar: Evil, Fire, Law, Strength,
Lurue: Animal, Chaos, Good, Healing
Luthic: Earth, Evil, Healing
Malar: Animal, Chaos, Evil, Strength
Marthammor Duin: Good, Protection, Travel
Mask: Evil, Luck, Trickery
Mielikki: Animal, Good, Plant, Travel
Milil: Good, Knowledge
Moradin: Earth, Good, Law, Protection, War
Mystra: Good, Knowledge, Magic
Nephthys: Chaos, Good, Protection
Nobanion: Animal, Good, Law
Oghma: Knowledge, Luck, Travel, Trickery
Osiris: Death, Good, Law, Plant
Red Knight: Law, War
Rillifane Rallathil: Chaos, Good, Plant, Protection
Savras: Knowledge, Law, Magic
Sebek: Animal, Evil, Water
Segojan Earthcaller: Good, Earth
Sehanine Moonbow: Chaos, Good, Knowledge, Travel
Selûne: Chaos, Good, Protection, Travel
Selvetarm: Chaos, Evil, War,
Set: Air, Evil, Law, Magic
Shar: Evil, Knowledge
Sharess: Chaos, Good, Travel
Shargass: Chaos, Evil, Trickery
Sharindlar: Chaos, Good, Healing
Shaundakul: Air, Chaos, Protection, Travel
Sheela Peryroyl: Air, Plant
Shevarash: Chaos, War
Shiallia: Animal, Good, Plant
Siamorphe: Knowledge, Law
Silvanus: Animal, Plant, Protection, Water
Solonor Thelandira: Chaos, Good, Plant, War
Sseth: Chaos, Evil, Knowledge
Sune: Chaos, Good, Protection
Talona: Chaos, Evil, Destruction
Talos: Chaos, Evil, Destruction, Fire

Tempus: Chaos, Protection, Strength, War
Thard Harr: Animal, Chaos, Good, Plant
Thoth: Knowledge, Magic
Tiamat: Evil, Law
Torm: Good, Healing, Law, Protection, Strength
Tymora: Chaos, Good, Luck, Protection, Travel
Tyr: Good, Knowledge, Law, War
Ubtao: Plant, Protection
Ulutiu: Animal, Law
Umberlee: Chaos, Destruction, Evil, Water
Urdlen: Chaos, Earth, Evil
Urogalan: Earth, Death, Law, Protection
Uthgar: Animal, Chaos, Strength, War
Valkur: Air, Chaos, Good, Protection
Velsharoon: Death, Evil, Magic
Vergadain: Luck, Trickery

Vhaeraun: Chaos, Evil, Travel, Trickery
Waukeen: Knowledge, Travel, Protection
Xvim: Law, Destruction, Evil
Yondalla: Good, Law, Protection
Yurtrus: Evil, Death, Destruction,

- low-light vision (duration as if casting the *darkvision* spell)
- *dispel magic* (only works against light-creating spells such as *light, continual flame,* and so on)
- *darkness*
- *summon monster VI* (summons one umber hulk, useable only once every tenday, 2 charges)

If the summoned umber hulk is slain, the staff crumbles to dust.

Caster Level: 11th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Staff, *darkness, darkvision, dispel magic, summon monster VI;* ***Market Price:*** 50,000 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 25,000 gp + 2,000 XP.

Staff of Vision: This staff has the following powers:

- *darkvision* (1 charge)
- *remove blindness* (2 charges)
- *see invisibility* (1 charge)
- *true seeing* (2 charges)

The staff has an unusual side effect. Using it is mentally tiring, and each use requires a Will save (DC 12) or the bearer suffers 1 point of temporary Intelligence damage.

Caster Level: 12th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft Staff, *darkvision, see invisibility, remove blindness, true seeing;* ***Market Price:*** 24,000 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 12,000 gp + 960 XP.

War Wizard Cloak (Weathercloak): These full-cut, black cloaks hang to mid-boot on an average human. Cut to overlap on the chest and cover the wearer's arms, they have a high collar and a separate pull-over hood. They are embroidered with a white upraised human palm in a circle on the right collar, a purple dragon on the left collar, and another on the center point of the hood (so it is displayed to the rear when the hood is pulled back). The cloak constantly provides the wearer with the following benefits: *endure elements (cold), darkvision,* and *feather fall* (self only). Once per day, the wearer can use *dimension door, lesser ironguard, protection from arrows,* and *sending.*

These cloaks are normally only worn by Cormyrian war-wizards, nobles, or specially chosen agents, although with the number of dead war-wizards caused by the war against the dragon Nalavara, it is likely that some have been looted from corpses and can be found in other hands.

Caster Level: 9th; ***Prerequisites:*** Craft

Wondrous Item, *darkvision, dimension door, endure elements, feather fall, lesser ironguard, protection from arrows, sending;* ***Market Price:*** 30,375 gp; ***Cost to Create:*** 15,187 gp + 1,215 XP.

SPELLS

As with magic items, the FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign is known for its unusual spells. The *war wizard cloak (above)* refers to the *lesser ironguard* spell, so this spell is included here to allow you to fully utilize that item's abilities.

Lesser Ironguard

Abjuration
Level: Sor/Wiz 5
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

The caster or a creature touched becomes immune to nonmagical metal. Nonmagical metal items (including metal weapons) simply pass through the affected creature, and the target of the spell can walk through nonmagical metal barriers such as iron bars. Attacks delivered by metal items (such as poison on a dagger) affect the creature normally. If the spell expires while metal is inside an affected creature, the metal object is shunted out of its body (or the body away from the metal, if the metal is an immovable object like a set of iron bars). The affected creature and the object take 1d6 points of damage as a result (ignoring the object's hardness rating for determining damage to it).

Because the target of the spell passes through metal, it can ignore armor and hardness bonuses on opponents it attacks with unarmed attacks.

Material Components: a tiny shield made of wood, glass, or crystal.

SEMEMMON
TODD LOCKWOOD

FEATS

The new FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign setting has more than fifty new feats. One of the new concepts we developed is the regional feat: a feat you can get only if you come from a particular area or study with people from there. As the RPGA's LIVING CITY campaign is very popular and takes place in the FORGOTTEN REALMS, we decided to help out those LC players converting their characters over to the new edition, so here are three of the new FORGOTTEN REALMS feats, all of which are available to natives of the Vast (and, you'll note, a few other places). These regional feats use a feat slot just like any other feat; you don't get them for free just for being from a particular place.

LUCK OF HEROES [General]

Your people survive when no one expects them to come through.
Regions: Aglarond, Dalelands, Tethyr, the Vast.
Benefit: You get a +1 bonus to all Fortitude, Reflex, and Will saves.

MERCANTILE BACKGROUND [General]

You come from a family that excels at a particular trade.
Regions: Gray Dwarf, Impiltur, Lake of Steam, Lantan, Sembia, Svirfneblin, Tashalar, Tethyr, Thesk, the Vast.
Benefit: Choose a Craft or Profession skill. You get a +2 bonus to all Craft or Profession checks for that skill and a +2 bonus to all Appraise checks.

THUG [General]

Your people know how to get the jump on the competition and push other people around.
Regions: Calimshan, Dragon Coast, Moonsea, Pirate Isles, Unther, the Vast, Vilhon Reach, Waterdeep.
Benefit: You get a +2 bonus on Initiative checks, and a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks.

ROGUES GALLERY

THE HEROES OF MYTH DRANNOR

by Carrie Bebris · illustrated by Dev Madan

Fantasy characters lead pretty rough lives. Every time they turn around, it seems someone's trying to take over the world.

This time it's the Cult of the Dragon, led by an evil sorceress and her dracolich general. The dastardly duo has found a way to control the Mythal, the ancient magic that once protected the ruined elven capital of Myth Drannor. Together they have used the Mythal's power to resurrect the Pool of Radiance, a life-draining menace that Faerûnians think was destroyed years ago. The pool will enable the cult to—you guessed it—achieve world domination.

Alas, will the forces of evil never learn?

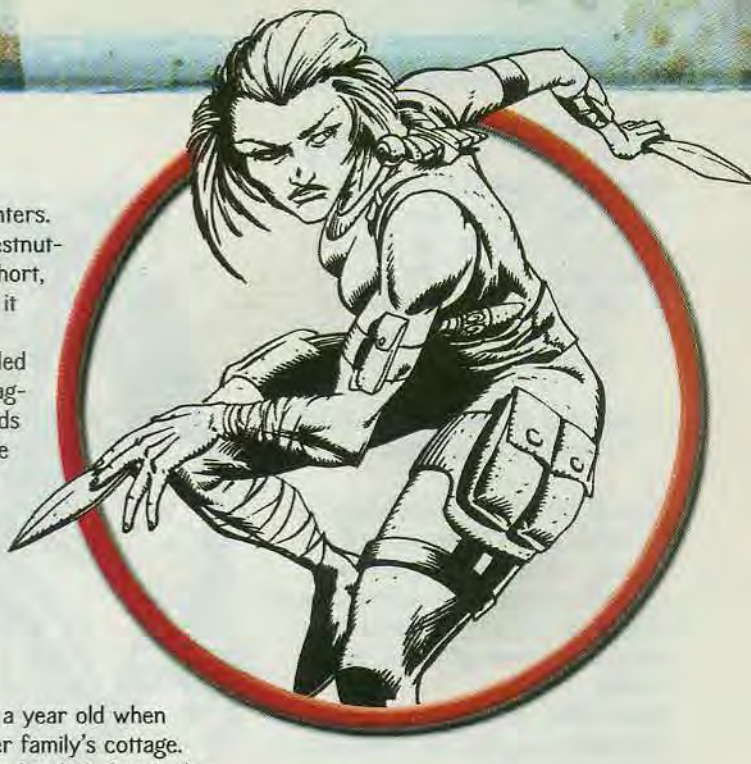
Enter four adventurers who thought they had signed up to keep an eye on the reawakened pool, only to find themselves thrown into the middle of the cult's nefarious plot. Ah, well—the course of true heroism never did run smooth. Battling dark sorcerers and undead creatures at every turn, the intrepid band must ally with the city's ghostly guardians to restore the corrupted Mythal. Only then can they confront the Cult of the Dragon, its sinister pool, and its diabolical leaders.

Pool of Radiance: Ruins of Myth Drannor is the companion novel to the new SSI computer game of the same name. It's also the first novel to feature characters inspired by the new edition of the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game. Archmage Kya Mordrayn and her minions wield spells in a manner never before seen in Faerûn. Cult fighters display their superior weaponmastery with lethal precision. The dracolich Pelendralaar puts a terrifying new face on undeath.

But the heroes prove themselves worthy opponents to these and the other villains they encounter. Corran D'Arcey discovers that paladinhood is more than blustering about faith and smiting evil in the name of one's god. Sorceress Ghleanna Stormlake's intuitive approach to magic enables her to adapt her spell-casting as circumstances demand. Durwyn, the brawny fighter, provides quiet strength—both of arms and of character—when the party needs it most. Kestrel, the fiercely independent rogue with a sixth sense for danger, discovers she must cooperate with the rest of the party in order to survive.

Kestrel, Corran, Ghleanna, and Durwyn begin their journey as talented but untested adventurers. As they confront cult forces and hone their skills, they evolve into formidable champions. They are presented here as they prepare to challenge Mordrayn and Pelendralaar in the climactic final showdown.

Kestrel



Female Human, 14th-level Rogue

Strength	13 (+1)	**Fort. Save**	+6
Dexterity	19 (+4)	**Ref. Save**	+13
Constitution	15 (+2)	**Will Save**	+7
Intelligence	17 (+3)	**Alignment**	NG
Wisdom	16 (+3)	**Speed**	30 ft.
Charisma	14 (+2)	**Size**	M (5')

Armor Class	19	**Melee Attack**	+11/+6
Hit Points	98	**Ranged Attack**	+14/+9

Special: Sneak attack +7d6, evasion, uncanny dodge (Dex bonus to AC, can't be flanked, +2 vs. traps), opportunist, improved evasion.
Skills: Appraise +8, Balance +12, Bluff +8, Climb +15, Concentration +6, Disable Device +14, Decipher Script +8, Escape Artist +8, Gather Information +8, Hide +17, Innuendo +8, Intimidate +9, Jump +8, Listen +17, Move Silently +18, Open Lock +17, Pick Pocket +14, Search +15, Sense Motive +12, Spot +12, Swim +8, Tumble +17, Use Magic Device +7, Use Rope +8.
Feats: Alertness, Ambidexterity, Expertise, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse (dagger), Weapon Focus (club).
Languages: Common, Dwarven, Halfling, Orc.
Possessions: A gift from Harldain Ironbar (a ghostly lord of Myth Drannor), Kestrel's *+3 leather armor* enables her to move as freely as if wearing a silk shirt. Her pair of *mantle rings* can absorb spells up to 4th level. They hold 8 remaining charges; each charge protects the wearer from one spell. Kestrel carries three ordinary-looking daggers, one in each boot and one in her belt. Loren's Blade, the dagger at her side, is a *+1 dagger of returning*. She also carries Borea's Blood, a blue crystal shard that functions as a *+2 dagger of icy burst*. Her more mundane possessions include a telescoping steel club, thieves' tools, a grappling hook, and a pair of weighted dice.

Appearance

Though only twenty-two years old, Kestrel looks closer to thirty due to her rough-and-tumble life. Short and slight of build, her body seldom relaxes—even in sleep she is on the alert. Her penetrating emerald eyes are quick to assess anyone she encounters. She wears her chestnut-colored hair in a short, boyish cut to keep it out of the way. Kestrel is left-handed but can throw a dagger from both hands with equal skill. She bears a long, thin scar on her left wrist from trying to pick an ensorcelled lock three years ago.

Background

Kestrel was barely a year old when bandits attacked her family's cottage. Her mother managed to hide her in the root cellar moments before the noisy cutthroats burst in, killed her parents, stole what little they could find of value, and burned the dwelling to the ground. Hours later, an old rogue named Quinn heard the baby's hungry cries coming from the smoking rubble. He named the orphaned child Kestrel, for the tiny girl's fierce eyes reminded him of a falcon.

Quinn raised Kestrel as a daughter, at first trying to protect her from the shady side of his life but ultimately teaching her everything he knew. His apprentice proved a talented pupil: When Quinn died in a tavern brawl, the twelve-year-old was well able to fend for herself. After his death, Kestrel drifted from city to city, plying her trade. She and Quinn had often fantasized about accumulating enough wealth to retire from thieving and live a pampered life, and she carried this dream with her as she wandered. Slowly, her stash of treasure grew.

Quinn had often counseled her that there was no honor among thieves, and to beware trusting a fellow rogue. His advice proved sound. When Kestrel was sixteen, she briefly teamed up with a forger named Eaden. Once he won her trust, he framed her for one of his solo jobs and absconded with her life savings while she dealt with the authorities. She resolved to never again leave herself vulnerable to betrayal and has worked alone ever since ...

Until now. Circumstances beyond Kestrel's control have forced her to team up with Corran, Ghleanna, and Durwyn to complete what she considers a suicide mission. But the more she works to thwart the cult's plans, the more the party's cause becomes her own.

Roleplaying Notes

Kestrel dislikes depending on others and is very slow to trust anyone, especially rogues and arcane spellcasters. Too much knowledge of their general psyche makes her wary of fellow rogues; too little information steers her clear of sorcerers and wizards. She has stayed alive by trusting her five senses. When senses fail, she relies on instinct—particularly the tingling sensation along her collarbone that warns of serious danger.

Years of working alone have made Kestrel impatient with group dynamics. She speaks her mind with little regard for diplomacy and becomes frustrated when her suggestions are overruled. This attitude leads to frequent disagreements with her fellow party members, whom she tends to regard as naïve do-gooders. She clashes most often with Corran, whose arrogance (not to mention overt prejudice) gets under her skin like nothing else.

Corran D'Arcey

Male Human, 13th-level Paladin of Tyr

Strength	18 (+4)	Fort. Save	+11
Dexterity	14 (+2)	Ref. Save	+6
Constitution	16 (+3)	Will Save	+6
Intelligence	17 (+3)	Alignment	LG
Wisdom	15 (+2)	Speed	20 ft.
Charisma	13 (+1)	Size	M (6')

Armor Class	22	Melee Attack	+17/+12/+7
Hit Points	147	Ranged Attack	+15/+10/+5

Special: *Detect evil,* divine grace, *lay on hands,* divine health, aura of courage, smite evil, *remove disease* (4/week), turn undead, warhorse, proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields.
Skills: Climb +10, Concentration +12, Diplomacy +14, Heal +17, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Knowledge (religion) +13, Ride +9, Sense Motive +7.
Feats: Combat Reflexes, Expertise, Extra Turning, Improved Critical (longsword), Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Focus (warhammer).
Languages: Common, Elven, Orc, Celestial.
Spells (2/2/1): 1st—*cure light wounds, divine favor;* 2nd—*resist elements, shield other;* 3rd—*prayer.*
Possessions: Corran wears *dwarven plate* and a large, steel *+2 shield of Necromantic spell turning* that provides added protection from mundane weapons as well as the ability to reflect Necromantic spells back at their caster (as the spell *spell turning*). The paladin also carries Pathfinder (a *+2 longsword*) and a holy symbol of Tyr.

Appearance

Though of average build, Corran D'Arcey nevertheless cuts a formidable figure. At twenty-three, he is a man confident of his place in the world and moves about as if he has a right to be there—wherever "there" is at the moment. His gray eyes can appear cold as steel when battling enemies and dark as storm clouds when provoked to anger, but his whole visage softens when in prayer or ministering to an injured comrade. Over his armor, Corran wears a tabard emblazoned with the scales-and-warhammer symbol of Tyr. A helm usually covers his short dark hair.

Background

Corran comes from a long line of paladins in a region that crawls with holy knights. His father (Baron Ethelred D'Arcey of Sarshel) and brothers all serve Tyr, as did countless generations of D'Arceys before them. Corran has thus been indoctrinated from the cradle in the worship of Tyr, the duties of paladinhood, and the nobility of his calling. In fact, he never deliberated over the choice to become a knight of Tyr: It was expected of him, and he accepted the vocation without question.

Corran received his military training in the keep of a neighboring noble (Baron Artur Gheinte, whose family traditionally trains D'Arcey heirs, and vice versa). He received his religious instruction from the high priest of the local temple. After taking his paladin vows at sixteen, he fought in several small campaigns to free Impiltur of encroaching monsters. But he found that wherever he went, he could not escape the long shadows cast by his older brothers, father, and paladin ancestors. He resolved to leave Impiltur for a time in order to prove himself worthy to serve Tyr in his own right. When, in the course of his travels, he heard rumors of the reawakened Pool of Radiance in nearby Phlan, he readily volunteered his sword.

Roleplaying Notes

As the third son of a baron, Corran has always known the privileges of high station. He has never wanted for anything, and—for all his lofty blustering about charity—lacks a true understanding of what life is like for those less fortunate. He speaks with the assumption of authority, a manner perceived (often accurately) as bossy or arrogant to those who don't know him well.

Corran holds romanticized notions about honor and what it means to be honorable, but these theories were never put to the test until he arrived in Myth Drannor. Now he finds that the concept of honor must be tempered with the realities of survival, a gradual awakening that causes him no small amount of worry and discomfort.

As a paladin, Corran is intolerant of rogues on general principle, a bias that blinds him to Kestrel's value to the party and causes him to clash with her continually. He respects Durwyn's battle skills and Ghleanna's command of magic; they, in turn, have accepted him as the party's de facto leader. His training has made him a talented strategist, and he has the good heart and noble motives a paladin should possess.

But in Kestrel's opinion, Corran could use a little humility.

Ghleanna Stormlake

Female Half-elf, 12th-level Sorcerer

Strength	11 (+0)	**Fort. Save**	+9
Dexterity	13 (+1)	**Ref. Save**	+8
Constitution	14 (+2)	**Will Save**	+15
Intelligence	18 (+4)	**Alignment**	CG
Wisdom	18 (+4)	**Speed**	30 ft.
Charisma	17 (+3)	**Size**	M (5' 6")

Armor Class	11	**Melee Attack**	+6/+1
Hit Points	58	**Ranged Attack**	+7/+2

Special: Proficient with all simple weapons.
Skills: Concentration +17, Diplomacy +10, Hide +8, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Knowledge (elven history) +11, Spellcraft +19, Spot +6.
Feats: Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Maximize Spell, Quicken Spell, Spell Penetration.
Languages: Common, Elven, Dwarven, Halfling, Sylvan, Ancient Elven.
Spells (6/7/7/7/6/5/3 from the following list): 0—*daze, detect magic, disrupt undead, ghost sound, light, mend, prestidigitation, read magic, resistance;* 1st—*burning hands, mage armor, magic missile, protection from evil, sleep;* 2nd—*blindness, flaming sphere, invisibility, knock, web;* 3rd—*dispel magic, haste, hold person, slow;* 4th—*confusion, fear, improved invisibility;* 5th—*feeblemind, hold monster;* 6th—*globe of invulnerability.*
Possessions: The sorceress wears a *+3 cloak of resistance* (bonus included above) and snakeskin boots that provide her with a +2 bonus to Fortitude saves vs. poison. Her staff absorbs fire and fire-based spells that target her as a *rod of absorption.* Ghleanna can release such spells from her staff on command within 24 hours of capturing them. Ghleanna also carries several *potions of cure serious wounds* concocted from blueglow moss, a plant native to Myth Drannor.

Appearance

A slender young woman, Ghleanna has long golden hair, gold-flecked blue eyes, and slightly pointed ears that reveal the moon elf heritage on her mother's side. Though she dons mage robes while in the laboratory or library, she normally wears brown leggings, leather knee-high boots, a loose-fitting shirt, and a dark green cloak when traveling.

Background

Ghleanna Stormlake is the product of a tryst between a human adventurer and a noble elf maiden. Ghleanna's mother, Jesenalae, was a young girl when her own parents died and she went to live with her brother. Adualacathus Stormlake was a hard man with little compassion for his orphaned sister. When Jesenalae reached adolescence, she ran away from the tyranny of her brother's house. She did not get far before stumbling upon a human named Garth, who lay wounded from hunting a magically protected stag in the elven woods. Jesenalae helped Garth reach a cabin just outside the forest, where she lingered a few days too long nursing his injuries. Garth seduced the kindness-starved girl, then returned to his human wife and child with nary a thank-you-ma'am.

Devastated—and desperate when she discovered she was pregnant—Jesenalae returned to her brother's house. He grudgingly took her in, but she received no end of verbal abuse for her folly. Intending to leave as soon as possible after her child was born, she did not reveal that the baby's father was human, for she knew the fact would only enrage Adualacathus further. When Jesenalae died in childbirth, Adualacathus wanted to quietly smother her "half-breed spawn," but his normally timid wife intervened. He spared the child but warned his wife to never intercede on Ghleanna's behalf again. She didn't.

Ghleanna thus grew up unloved and ostracized in her uncle's house. Though she exhibited a gift for magic from an early age, Adualacathus forbade her to develop it. Ghleanna was ordered to tamp down the mystical power that pooled and welled within her, just as she was forced to quell her spirit. Then came the wondrous day when Ghleanna's human half-brother arrived. Garth had made a deathbed confession about the seduction, and his more honorable son had gone in search of the wronged Jesenalae afterward. Instead he discovered Ghleanna, a neglected waif whose natural talents were wasting away with disuse. At his invitation, Ghleanna departed with her half-brother and never looked back.

Ghleanna's brother knew little of the arcane arts himself but arranged for her to meet a wizard friend of his. The mage, recognizing an unusually intuitive element in Ghleanna's magical talent, brought the girl to the attention of Elminster. The famous wizard took her on as an apprentice to both instruct and study her.

Under Elminster's guidance, Ghleanna has learned how to channel her powers. But fully mastering them is something she must figure out for herself, for her instinctive method of spellcasting—without spellbooks or scrolls—lies beyond the direct experience of even the great mage of Shadowdale.

Roleplaying Notes

Because she grew up in a hostile house where she could never do anything right, Ghleanna often falls into her much-practiced role of mediator—trying to placate both sides in disagreements that arise within the party. Her childhood isolation has also made her an introvert, though she isn't afraid to state an opinion when she believes she has one worth sharing. She regards the fellow orphan Kestrel as a bit of a kindred spirit, Durwyn as a gentle (but puissant) giant, and Corran as a man whose goodness is surpassed only by her half-brother's.

Durwyn

Human Male, 11th-level Fighter

Strength	20 (+5)	Fort. Save	+11
Dexterity	10 (+0)	Ref. Save	+3
Constitution	18 (+4)	Will Save	+3
Intelligence	9 (–1)	Alignment	LG
Wisdom	11 (+0)	Speed	20 ft.
Charisma	14 (+2)	Size	M (6' 7")

Armor Class	18	Melee Attack	+16/+11/+6
Hit Points	151	Ranged Attack	+11/+6/+1

Special: Proficient with all simple and martial weapons, all types of armor, and shields.
Skills: Climb +13, Jump +6, Ride +5, Spot +7.
Feats: Cleave, Expertise, Far Shot, Point Blank Shot, Great Cleave, Improved Critical, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Focus (light crossbow), Weapon Focus (shortbow), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe).
Possessions: Durwyn wears magic armor (*+3 chainmail*) given to him by Haldain Ironbar. His weapon of choice is the battleaxe, but he is also an excellent marksman with his short bow. Along with his ordinary ammunition, he carries three bronze-tipped arrows with unusual carvings.

Appearance

Durwyn is a large man with wide shoulders and muscular limbs. He wears his coarse blond locks tied back and trimmed short on top to keep hair from falling in his eyes during battle. His square jaw gives way to a neck thickly corded with muscles. During battle, his eyes reflect fierce determination, but in times of peace they reveal kindness unexpected in one whose body seems sculpted for brute force.

Background

Durwyn grew up on a farm just outside of Phlan. The eighth of eleven children, he was raised as much by his older siblings as by his parents. The bustling, noisy household was often brimming with laughter and always full of love, but there was never quite enough food on the table or enough patches for the threadbare hand-me-downs into which young Durwyn struggled to squeeze his rapidly-growing body.

To ease the strain of such a large family, one of Durwyn's older brothers left home for the "big city" and joined Phlan's city guard. When Durwyn turned thirteen, he followed suit. Though young and untrained, the burly teen exhibited such impressive raw strength that the guard captain readily accepted him and arranged for proper weapons training.

Durwyn proved a skilled fighter, excelling in the use of the battleaxe and shortbow. In his five years as a guard, he has earned the notice of his commanding officers for unmatched loyalty and discipline. He competently and unquestioningly carries out orders, and volunteers for tough assignments with alacrity. But he has never been considered for a promotion: Durwyn is a follower, not a leader. Even he recognizes that he lacks the quick thinking necessary for crisis command. Until his adventures in Myth Drannor, he was happy to simply do what he was told and give half his pay to his parents each week.

When the Pool of Radiance returned, Durwyn's commanding officer assigned him to guard it. But the warrior would have volunteered for the duty anyway. While he is too young to remember the events of nearly thirty years ago, frightening tales of the pool's first appearance live on in local legend. Despite personal risk, Durwyn will do anything to protect his home and family from the encroaching evil.

Roleplaying Notes

Easy to dismiss at first, Durwyn is a person one comes to appreciate more upon better acquaintance. By his own admission he contributes mostly muscle to the party, but he offers some surprisingly good suggestions at times—while others endlessly debate strategy, he comes out with a simple "Why don't we just do this?" solution.

Durwyn has a good heart. He wants to do the right thing but isn't always sure what that is. He is unwaveringly loyal to his companions and trusts them to do most of the thinking. When discord arises, he finds himself torn, wanting to follow what all sound like clever ideas to him. He admires Corran for his military prowess and his command capabilities; Ghleanna's magical powers impress him beyond words. Initially intimidated by Kestrel's sharp tongue, he soon grew to admire her quick wits and keen senses.

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OF COURSE, WE "PLAY" THIS "GAME" EVERY DAY, SO SHOWING EVERYONE THE ROPES WILL BE A SNAP FOR PROS LIKE US!
I'M SORRY, BUT ALIGNMENT VIOLATIONS AREN'T BEING SHOWCASED THIS EPISODE.
CLERIC
WARDROBE
FOR OUR FIRST LOOK AT HOW 3E WORKS, YEAGAR WILL DEMONSTRATE HOW COMBAT IS RESOLVED!
IN THE NEW RULES, DMs ARE GIVEN THE TOOLS TO MORE EASILY TAILOR ENCOUNTERS TO HOW POWERFUL THE PLAYERS ARE.
A SIMPLE NUMERIC SYSTEM LETS THE DM—
SHOW HOW MUCH HE SUCKS AT MATH.
UM, ARTAX? HOW ABOUT SOME SPELLS?
ER, YES... THE 3E MAGIC SYSTEM INTRODUCES QUITE A FEW NEW SPELLS FOR THE ADVENTURING WIZARD!
THANK YOU.
WHAT'S NEW? SCRIPT
NOW, I'LL DISPATCH THIS BEAST WITH... AH... SILENT IMAGE? ANIMATE ROPE? ARCANE LOCK? CAT'S GRACE? DIMENSIONAL ANCHOR? WHERE THE HECK IS A FIREBA—
PACIFIST 3-E SPELL BOOK
I THINK WE SHOULD MOVE ON TO CLERICAL SPELLS, RIGHT, YEAGAR?
YEAH. THESE DIGESTIVE JUICES ARE GIVING ME A NASTY RASH!
I SAID, I'M NOT WEARING— OH! THANKS!
WHAT'S NEW? SCRIPT
OOOH! ONE OF THE SPIFFY THINGS CLERICS CAN DO, IF THEY WORK HARD AND EAT THEIR VEGGIES...
WHAT'S NEW? SCRIPT
IS CAST THE NEW MIRACLE SPELL! ISN'T THAT PEACHY?
ANVIL OF DAMOCLES
AND I THINK WE'RE ALL GLAD THAT THE RULES FOR DUCT TAPE HAVE STAYED THE SAME! RIGHT, GUYS?
YIPPEE...
I CAN'T BELIEVE THESE PEOPLE AGREED TO DO THIS! DIDN'T THEY READ THE SCRIPT?
UM, THEY READ A SCRIPT...
I CAN'T WAIT 'TILL THEY GET TO THE PART ABOUT CRITICAL HITS!
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